

"BURNT OFFERINGS"

Screenplay by
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and
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From the novel by Robert Marasco

July 30, 1974

"BURNT OFFERINGS"

FADE IN

EXT. QUEEN'S BLVD. - FULL SHOT - DAY

1

The street is jammed with late-afternoon homeward-bound traffic; horns BLARE; exhaust fumes billow; drivers YELL at one another. We see a Ford pickup pull out from a parking space, accelerate away. Two cars instantly home in on the vacant space: a tiny red Honda Civic and BEN ROLFE'S white Chevy Camaro. At the last second, the agile Honda beats out the Camaro.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE ON BEN

2

He is a strong-featured man in his mid-30's.

BEN

(in total frustration)

Shit!

He leans from the car window to deliver a "screw you" gesture to the triumphant Honda driver, then guns off with an angry SQUEAL of tires.

INT. CAMARO - MOVING SHOT - OVER BEN'S SHOULDER
THROUGH WINDSHIELD

3

as he drives along the streets searching for a new parking slot. The car corners and we see an empty slot at the far end of the street.

LONG VIEW OF THIRTY-NINTH ROAD - SHOOTING TOWARD
CAMARO

4

as it heads toward CAMERA and the rare, open parking space in f.g. of SHOT. A green sports Datsun has also spotted the slot, and another "race" is on. This time, Ben wins, wheeling into the space just ahead of the sports car.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE ON BEN

5

as he aims an evil grin at the Datsun driver.

BEN

Got it, you bastard!

In return, Ben gets from the departing Datsun, the same "screw you" gesture he gave to the Honda.

EXT. THIRTY-NINTH ROAD - MOVING SHOT - DAY

We begin to ROLL CREDITS as Ben moves along the crowded sidewalks, carrying a briefcase, sweating in the early summer heat; his tie pulled loose, coat over one arm, shirtsleeves rolled. A bus roars past in a swirl of dirty exhaust, barely missing him as he crosses over to an ugly pile of brown apartment buildings, turns into the courtyard.

EXT. COURTYARD - ANGLE ON PLAYGROUND - DAY

as Ben enters and crosses toward CAMERA. This is the area between the two apartment buildings, three stories below the Rolfes' apartment. Dozens of children, in summer clothes, playing; several benches filled with young mothers, most of them with a baby carriage within reach. Ben is moving toward the entrance to his building. Children swirl around him. Suddenly, DAVID, a boy of ten appears from nowhere and zooms by Ben on his bike.

DAVID

(waving)

Hi, Dad.

BEN

(turns, calling)

Where're you going?

David calls back something unintelligible and disappears out into the street.

BEN

Be careful, huh?

He stands there for a moment, then continues across the courtyard. Suddenly, a MOTHER on one of the benches shouts to her kid o.s.

MOTHER

Dar-lene! Get over here! Now
you're really gonna get it!

She rises menacingly, almost knocking Ben down as she charges by. Ben watches her go, shaking his head.

BEN

(sarcastically)

Excuse me.

BEN'S P.O.V. - THE MOTHER

as she moves toward a very unattractive, fat nine-year-old girl who is beating on a much smaller boy.

3

EXT. ENTRANCE TO BEN'S BUILDING

9

A cluster of old women on camp chairs sit by the entrance gossiping and watching the courtyard activity. They look up as Ben ENTERS THE SHOT.

BEN

(nodding brightly)

Ladies...

There is no reply. CAMERA HOLDS on them as they watch Ben enter the building. The moment the door closes, they resume their gossiping and whispering.

INT. ROLFE APARTMENT BATHROOM - ANGLE ON MARIAN 10

as she stands by the sink looking into the bathroom mirror, combing her hair. She's a pretty girl of not-quite-thirty, with light-brown hair and a trim full figure. She wears a tight-fitting blouse which accents her breasts, and a tight skirt. From the apartment below, the discordant SOUNDS of a practicing piano. O.s., the SOUND of the living room door opening.

BEN

(o.s., calling to her)

Me!

INT. LIVING ROOM

11

As MARIAN enters, Ben is checking the mail and tossing it aside.

MARIAN

(kissing him lightly)

Hi, baby.

Smiling, he moves away from her, stops in the middle of the room, sniffs.

BEN

The place smells of lemon oil.

MARIAN

(beat)

I've been a busy girl. How about a beer?

BEN

Okay.

He flops into a chair letting out a sigh. In b.g., Marian crosses into the kitchen, the SOUND of the refrigerator opening, etc.

Cont.

BEN

Hon, I just saw Davy downstairs.
He almost ran me over.

(beat)

Where was he going? Out to earn
us a decent living, I hope.

INT. KITCHEN

12

Marian is pouring the beers into two glasses. From the room below, the SOUND of the piano suddenly becomes much louder. As it continues to build, she hears Ben begin to YELL.

BEN

(o.s.)

I can't take it!

(then louder)

I can't take it!

She looks toward the living room, but before she can say anything, the copper pots begin to tremble, as the whole apartment starts to shake. A muffled thud, thud, thud, coming from the living room.

MARIAN

My God! Ben!

INT. LIVING ROOM

13

As Marian rushes in, Ben is bouncing up and down on the rug, right above the SOUND of the piano. The lamps are shaking, a porcelain figure begins to dance across an endtable. Darting to it, Marian grabs it just before it falls.

MARIAN

You're crazy, stop it, Ben, stop it!

He gives one last heels-together jump and stops and the piano stops.

BEN

(whispering)

Listen, I think it worked.

MARIAN

(shaking her head)

You're absolutely mad. Nuts.

She moves around the room, straightening the pictures, checking the lamps and bowls and figurines that fill all the polished surfaces.

BEN

Where's that beer?

As she EXITS into the kitchen, Ben calls after her...

Cont.

BEN

It's got to be a conspiracy. The whole bloody city is after my ass.

As she reenters with the beers, he pats the cushion beside him. Marian hands him his glass, takes out two coasters, and settles beside him.

MARIAN

(nodding at the floor)

You face her now.

BEN

Let the old bitch worry about facing me.

(Takes a sip)

She'll think you did it. That's what I'll tell her anyway.

MARIAN

You would, wouldn't you?

BEN

It's every man for himself, sister.

He smiles, pulling her closer. She slips her hand inside his shirt, rubbing his chest. He settles deeper into the couch.

MARIAN

Unwinding?

BEN

Getting there.

A long sigh, then he lifts his feet onto the coffee table. His hand moves to her knee which he strokes lightly. In the b.g., beyond his profile, the windows of the neighboring building across the court can be seen. A blowsy woman, that they refer to as the "SUPERVISOR," fills an upper window, leaning her bloated elbows on a pillow across the sill. She stares directly into their apartment.

MARIAN

(nods toward window)

She's there again. Doesn't she ever leave that window?

BEN

(not looking)

I keep telling you, Marian, she can't. She's a household god, and she's naked from the waist down.

Marian laughs.

MARIAN

So how'd it go today? Or shouldn't I ask?

BEN

You shouldn't but you did. How's it always go? The kids were bright, responsive; on fire. Then to top it all, a faculty meeting. How's that for sheer heart-pounding excitement?

He belches.

MARIAN

(slaps him playfully)

Pig.

He turns to face her. His smile is innocent and vulnerable.

BEN

You know something? I don't like what I'm doing very much.

MARIAN

You always say that this time of year.

BEN

And I always mean it.

MARIAN

Two weeks to go, right? You'll survive.

BEN

Not this time, baby. I'm cracking.

He makes the sound of something large collapsing.

MARIAN

Hey!

(nudges him)

I've got the answer to all our problems.

She springs up and crosses the room; picks up a newspaper and crosses back to him sitting on the floor in front of him.

MARIAN

Now don't yell. Just listen.

Cont.

BEN
(stentorian)
Her position became suppliant.

MARIAN
(pokes him; clears her
throat; begins to read)
'Unique summer home. Restful,
secluded. Perfect for large
family. Pool, private beach,
dock -- '

He laughs.

MARIAN
Listen! What could be more
perfect? 'Two and a half hours
from the city...Long season.
Very reasonable!...

BEN
Honey...
(nods at an
antique desk)
...that desk was reasonable,
remember?

MARIAN
What has that got to do with it?

BEN
A lesson in semantics, the decline
and fall of meaning.

MARIAN
Oh, stop; we're not in your
crummy classroom.

BEN
Lucky us.
(keeping it light)
The breakfront was reasonable, or
so they told me, and the fancy
chairs --

MARIAN
Bergeres.

BEN
...the endtables, the lamps, the
chotzkies, and Christ knows what
you've got stashed away in the
closets.

Cont.

BEN (Cont.)

(beat)
'Reasonable,' or some parody of the word, has left us with roughly two thousand in the bank, after nine years.

MARIAN

Why are you foaming at the mouth, for God's sake?

BEN

Because a house with a beach and a pool and a dock is not going to be reasonable, nohow. Now that's what we call nipping it in the bud.

She moves closer to him.

MARIAN

Benjie, why be such a shit?

She creeps between his legs, presses her face against his chest. Her hair brushes his arms as she maneuvers herself into position.

BEN

I get it.

MARIAN

Get what?

BEN

Your tit 'n' ass getup. You're trying to seduce me into it.

MARIAN

Would I do anything so cheap and transparent?

(hugs him tighter)
They're expecting us.

BEN

(looks at her,
surprised)

When?

MARIAN

Saturday.

She slides her hand inside the leg of his trousers, starts to tickle him.

Cont.

MARIAN
(teasing)
You're not mad, are you?

BEN
I'm not mad.

MARIAN
That's my Benjie.

She kisses his neck.

BEN
What I am, however, is something
close to horny, and unless you
want to give the 'Supervisor'
over there a really hot show,
you better pull down the shade.

She laughs, rises.

MARIAN
Don't go way.

CAMERA PANS her to the window, where we see the fat woman
still at her perch in the building across the court.

REVERSE ANGLE - THROUGH WINDOW - SHOOTING ON MARIAN 14

as she gives a little finger-wave INTO CAMERA and pulls down
the shade.

ANGLE ON THE "SUPERVISOR"

15

unmoving in the window, a sour, disapproving expression on
her face. O.s., the SOUND of the off-key piano begins again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY - DAY

16

as the white Rolfe Camaro buzzes along.

INT. CAMARO - MOVING SHOT - BEN AND MARIAN

17

They are in casual weekend sports clothes. Ben is driving,
Marian next to him, while David is in the back seat burrowing
in a picnic hamper.

BEN
I thought Aunt Elizabeth
was going with us.

Cont.

MARIAN

She was, but you know
how busy she gets.

(laughs)

Today...she starts her new
Karate class.

Ben laughs.

MARIAN

(smiling)

She claims she'll need it
in case someone tries to
molest her.

BEN

She should be so lucky.

EXT. RIVERHEAD OFF-RAMP - DAY

18

as the car comes off the Expressway toward CAMERA, PAN WITH
IT.

MARIAN'S VOICE

(o.s.)

We take Route 25, go on past
Cutchogue and the little
Peconic Bay, get off 25 at
Orient Road, then follow...

EXT. SHORE ROAD - DAY

19

a narrow dirt lane. Deep, rich foliage presses the road
on both sides. Everything is shimmering green, as the
car comes TOWARD CAMERA.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT

20

They are all looking out the windows.

MARIAN

Lovely.

BEN

God, yes!

David is excited; he leans his head out the window smelling
the air.

DAVID

Now, is this the country?

BEN

It sure is, chief.

11

ANGLE ON MARIAN 21

peering ahead. She points.

MARIAN

There it is, seventeen Shore Road.

MOVING SHOT - THROUGH CAR WINDSHIELD 22

We see, affixed crookedly to a crumbling stone wall, a bronze plate with the number 17. The car swings into the gateless, roughly-pebbled drive, darkened by a tunnel-like overhang of trees.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT 23

Broken shafts of sunlight dance and glitter as they move deeper into the drive. Heavy foliage begins brushing the side of the car.

ANGLE ON BEN 24

as a branch suddenly whips through the open window and snaps across his cheek.

BEN

Jesus!

WIDER ANGLE 25

MARIAN

What happened?!

BEN

(rubbing his
cheek)

Goddam twig got me.

MARIAN

Roll up your window.

Ben looks in the rearview mirror.

BEN

You okay, Davy?

Suddenly, Marian reacts to something out the front window.

MARIAN

(gasps)

My God!

THEIR P.O.V. - MOVING SHOT - THROUGH WINDSHIELD 26

Straight ahead, the woods have come to an end and the full view bursts. Spreading to the left is a vast green field with coarse high grass, thickets, clumps of trees, many of

12

26 Cont.

them dead. And way in the distance on a slight rise surrounded by trees, a magnificent house.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT

27

David leans forward incredulously.

DAVID

That our house?

BEN

No, Dave. That is not our house. Nohow.

EXT. DRIVE - WIDE ANGLE

28

As car continues along the drive up toward the house, we get a good look at it. It is a great, rambling mass of gables and dormers and rounded bays. Wide steps lead to the central part of the house which is fronted by a long portico and flanked by two great wings, their gables peaking the trees.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT - OVER BEN'S SHOULDER

29

As they close in on the house we see a weed-choked pattern of shrubs and untrimmed hedges, a flaking summer pavillion, and the house itself in desperate need of repair. Roof tiles rippling and dirty grey, windows patched with cardboard, balisters tilting and some even missing, and for every tree that is full, there are two that are bare and long dead.

INT. CAR - ANGLE ON MARIAN

30

She shakes her head, sadly.

MARIAN

(to Ben)

God, what a waste!

HIGH ANGLE - FROM ROOF TO HOUSE

31

With a huge stone chimney in the f.g., the car can be seen far below as it comes to a stop in front of the house. The Rolfs get out.

ANGLE AT THE CAR

32

as they stand looking up at the house.

THEIR P.O.V. - THE HOUSE

33

As it looms over them it seems to be dominated by a single suite of rooms just under the central gable. Totally isolated on a floor above the rest of the house, its huge rounded bay windows overlook the entire estate. The whole thrust of the house seems to be toward that gable and those blank windows.

Cont.

MARIAN
(o.s., nodding
her head)
Well, it said 'suitable for
large family.'

BACK TO SCENE

34

Ben looks at her, sees she's serious.

BEN
Hey baby, be sensible. A house
like this you don't get for
'reasonable.'
(looks around)
There's probably a gatehouse
or some guest quarters or...

MARIAN
(cutting him off,
emphatic)
No, this is it.

BEN
Well, there's one way to find
out. Let's go.

They start up the steps.

ANGLE FROM THE PORCH

35

As they come up TOWARD CAMERA, the steps CREAK loudly under
their weight.

Ben crosses to the door, knocks. Almost instantly, the
door is pulled open by WALKER, a short old man, pink, round
and panting. He is wearing a peaked cap, sweat-stained,
ballooning trousers and a tank-top undershirt.

BEN
We're the Rolfes, we've come
about the summer place.

WALKER
I know, I know...
(having trouble
catching his breath)
...been expectin' you. I'm
Walker. The handyman.
(chuckles as though it
were some private joke)
Come on in.

He opens the door wider.

INT. FOYER

36

As they enter Marian stands motionless staring at the faded but unmistakable grandeur. There is a great crystal chandelier hanging high above the bare wooden floor. The droplets are cloudy, the floor dull and scraped. A large Oriental rug is rolled up against one wall and a magnificent mahogany staircase curves up to the second floor. Near the base, and following the curve up and out of sight, is a metal track.

BEN

(clearing his throat)

Uh...this isn't the place they're talking about renting, is it?

A pause, Marian holds her breath.

WALKER

Sure is.

Marian gives Ben an elated "I told you so" look as Walker crosses over to a set of double doors and opens them.

WALKER

You folks can wait here in the parlor while I go get their nibses.

INT. DRAWING ROOM

37

As they enter, Walker EXITS, closing the door behind them. The "parlor" is an enormous, magnificently furnished sun-filled room, rounded at one end and cut with French doors. But again the feeling is "gone to seed." The rug is worn, the walls peeling, and the drapes are heavy with dust.

EXT. TERRACE - SHOOTING THROUGH DIRTY GLASS
FRENCH DOORS

38

as Ben and David move TOWARD CAMERA, open the doors and step out onto the terrace. O.s. Marian can be seen exploring in the b.g.

DAVID

(excited)

Look, Dad, there's the beach.

BEN

Right chief, and keep your distance.

INT. DRAWING ROOM

39

as Marian notices an alcove at the far end of the room, starts toward it.

15

ANGLE AT ALCOVE

40

As Marian ENTERS SHOT, she finds a glass door, clouded with dust. She attempts to wipe one of the panes clear with her sleeve, tries to look in.

INT. GREENHOUSE - CLOSE ON DOOR

41

as Marian squints in through the clouded glass; she can barely see. Then pulling the door open, she steps inside. Immediately, she is hit by the overwhelming heat and rotting smell.

HER P.O.V. - THE GREENHOUSE

42

The glass walls and the roof are grey, crusted with dirt. Warped shelves and sagging tables extend the length of the room, covered with wilted, dead plants in dull orange pots -- trailing stiff brown vines. Other shattered pots litter the dirt floor.

MOVING SHOT - MARIAN

43

Despite the smell and the heat, she moves deeper into the room, dipping her fingers into a pot, picking off a petrified flower. Suddenly in the b.g. Ben appears at the door. The smell stops him in his tracks.

BEN

For Chrissake, what're you doing?

She looks over the room once more, gives a long sigh, and starts toward him.

MARIAN

It kills me, such waste!

BEN

Stop taking it so personally.

MARIAN

I can't help it.

(beat)

Where's David?

BEN

He went down to look at the beach.

(beat)

Now will you let me close this door. The stench is god-awful.

He pulls the door shut, then turns to the wall opposite the greenhouse door.

BEN

You see these?

She looks, reacts.

THEIR P.O.V. - THE WALL

Six mounted photos are lined up on the wall, all nearly identical shots showing the house and grounds in perfect condition. The oldest a sepia print, the latest a full-color shot, flushed with flowers and trimmed hedges, etc.

BEN

Weird. They're all the same.

Marian is studying the pictures. O.s. the SOUND of a door slamming shut, and then raised VOICES.

MARIAN

(excited)

Here they come.

She grabs Ben's arm pulling him back into the room.

ANGLE AT DOORS

as they fly open, and ROZ ALLARDYCE, a small, energetic woman in her early sixties briskly walks in. She is sharp-faced, with highly lacquered pepper-and-salt hair. Her outfit, dark blue, is tailored and expensive. She wears a double strand of pearls.

ROZ

Sorry to keep you waiting...

(beat)

...but I've had a morning!

She looks over her shoulder at Walker, who stands in the hall near a large mirror.

ROZ

(hard-voiced)

And if your busy schedule permits...

(beat)

You can take that mirror out too, it's cracked.

WALKER

(surly)

Not the only thing cracked around here.

ROZ

(turning back to

Ben and Marian)

The old fool!

In the b.g. Walker grumbling, drags the mirror off down the hall. Then Roz, smiling sweetly, extends a jeweled hand to Marian.

Cont.

ROZ

I'm Roz Allardyce...Brother will be down soon as he pulls himself together.

BEN

The Rolfes. Ben and Marian.

ROZ

I know. There's a boy too, isn't there?

BEN

Our son, David. He's down at the beach.

MARIAN

Is that all right?

ROZ

Sure, let him romp. Kids are good for the place.

Marian's eyes travel over the room.

ROZ

(looking straight at Marian)

You're thinking what you could do with the place aren't you?

MARIAN

(coloring slightly)

I'm afraid I am.

She gives Ben a helpless shrug. He looks at her, shakes his head, resigned.

BEN

(smiling)

All right, I suppose we ought to get down to the particulars.

ROZ

(still looking at Marian)

A practical man. Just like Brother.

MARIAN

(hesitant)

The ad did say 'reasonable.'

Cont.

She looks at Roz for corroboration.

ROZ

'Very reasonable' as I recall.

(beat)

And so it is, for the right people.

BEN

(cynically)

Assuming we were 'the right people' what would 'reasonable' be?

Marian gives him a sharp look.

ROZ

Well, there's a few questions first.

(a beat)

Would anyone else be taking the house with you?

MARIAN

Yes, Ben's Aunt Elizabeth.

ROZ

How old?

She looks at Ben, surprised by the question.

BEN

Seventy-four.

A long moment.

ROZ

(softly)

That's very sweet, very sweet indeed.

(beat, then back to business)

And you'd be willing to take the place say from July first to Labor Day?

Ben shrugs a tentative "yes." She moves a little closer to Marian.

ROZ

And you'd be willing to stay and tend the place?

Cont.

BEN
(surprised)
By ourselves?

ROZ
Yes.

BEN
Well, I don't know about
that.
(gives Marian
a look)
A place this large...

ROZ
Takes care of itself, Mr. Rolfe.
Believe me.
(a beat)
I guess what I'm really trying
to say is...could you love it,
the way Brother and I do?

Ben gives Marian a look. She ignores him.

MARIAN
(very quietly)
Of course we could...

She reaches for Ben's hand and presses it. There is a
long moment as Roz looks at her.

ROZ
Well, it seems to me...
(a beat)
that we're talking in the
neighborhood of -- nine hundred
dollars.

MARIAN
(hopefully)
A month?

BEN
(shaking his head)
Well, I don't know...

ROZ
(amused, cutting him
off)
That's for the whole summer.

Cont.

Before they can react, there is a sudden LOUD NOISE in the hall -- a metallic clattering and the low buzz of a motor, coming from the staircase.

ROZ
(announcing)
Brother.

The motor suddenly stops.

BROTHER
(o.s., shouting)
Walker! Walker, for Chrissake!

ROZ
(shaking her
head)
Brother's stuck on that damn
inclinators again.

In the b.g. Walker wheezes past the open doors.

WALKER
(calling)
Hold y'r horses, I'm comin'!

BROTHER
(o.s.)
Get me offa this goddamn
contraption!

His voice rattles and breaks into fit of coughing.

ROZ
(rolling her eyes)
Excuse me.

As she starts to leave the room the motor begins humming again.

WALKER
(o.s.)
It's movin', it's movin'.

BROTHER
(o.s.)
It's movin' up. I want down,
you horse's ass!

Cont.

Miss Allardyce turns in the doorway.

ROZ
(defensively)
He's a cripple.

WALKER
(o.s.)
You got a filthy mouth.

She slams the doors shut behind her, cutting off the sounds.

MARIAN
Unbelievable! An absolute
steal. There's no question,
is there, darling? We'll grab
it?

O.s. in the hall the SOUND of the inclinuator coming to a
thudding stop. Ben hunches his shoulders.

BEN
Jesus!

Marian shakes him insistently.

MARIAN
We'd be crazy not to.

BEN
In that case we'd fit right in
with the rest of them.

Suddenly the doors fly open and BROTHER zooms into the room
in a wheelchair, a plaid blanket covering his legs. He is
puffy and pallid, with thin red-gray hair covering a
freckled pate. Roz is right behind him.

BROTHER
(breathlessly)
Morning.

ROZ
This is my brother Arnold.
(beat, smiling)
And as you can see, he's full
of beans today.

Ben and Marian ad-lib HELLO'S as a chuckle rattles in the
old man's throat.

Cont.

BROTHER

So you're the folks gonna'
take the house, are you?

BEN

We've just been getting the
details.

Like Miss Allardyce, Brother seems to be studying Marian
especially.

BROTHER

I like 'em, Roz, I like 'em.

ROZ

Their boy's down at the beach.

He spins around, skirting a bouille writing desk, and comes
to a stop just inside the open terrace doors. He squints
down at the beach.

HIS P.O.V. - THE BEACH

46

David is climbing a small rock jetty. Suddenly he slips and
falls.

CLOSE SHOT - BROTHER

47

His face remains impassive.

HIS P.O.V.

48

David is in the dark sand, one knee clasped to his chest,
rocking back and forth, his head thrown back in pain.

BACK TO BROTHER

49

as he watches a few seconds longer.

BROTHER

Cute little feller. What is
he -- six, seven?

BEN

(o.s.)

Ten.

BROTHER

And fulla' the devil, I expect.

He chuckles appreciatively, and then wheels back to them.

MARIAN

Do you rent often?

Brother reaches into the pocket of his robe (heavy flannel) over pajamas buttoned to the neck, and pulls out a ragged tissue. He blows his nose.

ROZ

Depends.

Brother lowers his hand. His eyes are wet and red.

BROTHER

Right, what Roz here's talkin' about is our need for rest-and-recreation.

(smiles, his dentures clicking)

I'm comin' apart, as you can see --

ROZ

(mild rebuke)

Oh, Brother!

BROTHER

(shaking his head ruefully)

Oh, brother is right.

(a beat)

Well, what do you think?

MARIAN

(jumping in)

We love it.

ROZ

And, God, Brother!

(a beat, great enthusiasm)

...when it comes alive -- tell them that, tell them what it's like in summer.

BROTHER

They wouldn't believe it.

(his hands level the space in front of him)

It's beyond anything you ever seen.

Their voices grow louder as Roz now holding onto Brother's wheelchair starts moving toward them.

ROZ

Just look at what the years have brought to the place. There's centuries in these rooms, Mrs. Rolfe. It's been on the land longer than anyone can remember. Isn't that right, Brother?

BROTHER

Right. And believe me, it'll
be here long after we all kick off.

Very close now, they stop just in front of them.

ROZ

(hushed tone)

It's practically immortal. I
sincerely believe that.

BROTHER

And so do I.

There is a long moment as they just stare at Ben and Marian.
Finally Ben breaks the silence with a small, nervous laugh.

ROZ

(apologetically)

We got carried away, didn't we?
It's so easy, I suppose, when you
love something as much as Brother
and I love this house.

BEN

(smiling)

I'm waiting for the catch.

ROZ

(puzzled)

Catch?

BEN

You mean there's nothing more?
Nine hundred and it's ours?

Roz throws a quick look at Brother which Ben doesn't miss.

BROTHER

(red-faced)

Well...there is...one other thing.

ROZ

(drawing herself up)

Hardly a catch.

BROTHER

Correct, hardly. It's our mother.

Ben looks at Marian who puts out her hand to quiet him.

Cont.

MARIAN

(quietly)

What about her?

ROZ

(lost in admiration)

An eighty-five-year-old gal who
could pass for sixty.

BROTHER

God bless her, yes! She'll
outlive all of us.

ROZ

(great reverence)

Our darling!

Roz rests her hands on Brother's shoulder, her face
directly above his.

BROTHER

What Roz and me mean to say...
is our mother --

(a beat)

-- well, she never leaves the
house. Never leaves her room,
even, isn't that so, Roz?

Ben looks at Marian who is staring at them in rapt attention.

ROZ

(nodding)

Believe me, you'll never know
she's around.

BROTHER

Never even see her probably.
Sleeps most of the time.

ROZ

And when she's not sleeping, she's
working on her collection, right,
Brother?

BROTHER

(nods)

Her pitchers. Old photos, she's
got thousands of them.

ROZ

(softly)

The memories of a lifetime.

Cont.

Brother looks toward the ceiling, shaking his head with wonder and affection.

BROTHER

Our darling...

ROZ

And all you'd have to do is leave
a tray for her three times a day.
Just put it on the table in her
sitting room --

Roz and Brother are studying Marian closely. There is a long silence. Finally, Ben clears his throat uncomfortably.

BEN

Well, uh...we'll think it over
and let you know, okay?

MARIAN

(grabbing his arm)

But, Ben...

Suddenly, o.s. the SOUND of a small whining voice.

DAVID'S VOICE

(o.s.)

I fell.

ANGLE FAVORING DAVID

50

as he limps into the room, from the terrace. His elbows are scraped, his jeans torn, his left knee ragged and bleeding.

ANGLE ON MARIAN

51

CAMERA PANS WITH HER as she runs to him.

MARIAN

Davy! What happened!?
(goes to her knees
in front of him)
My God, baby!

DAVID

(beginning to cry)

I fell!

Ben ENTERS FRAME, begins to examine the boy.

BEN

Okay, chief, easy now.

ANGLE ON BROTHER AND ROZ

BROTHER

You want t'wash out them cuts.

ROZ

Bring him this way...into the kitchen.

(starting toward
the door)

I've got some first-aid stuff.

As they follow Roz out of the room, CAMERA HOLDS on Brother who watches them go. Then, turning, he wheels to the window. Suddenly Walker ENTERS FRAME, shuffling up behind him and picks up a gardenia plant. It is stiff, brown, leafless.

BROTHER

Where you goin' with that?

WALKER

(nods in direction
of the door)

Whozis said it was dead.

BROTHER

Did she?

(faces the bay)

Look again.

ANGLE ON THE PLANT

The base of the plant, just above the powdery soil, looks pale green, and on a dead branch, there are two fresh shoots.

CLOSE SHOT - WALKER

He looks at Brother's back, then at the plant again, reexamining it.

WALKER

Now ain't that somethin'!

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT - BEN AND MARIAN

The trees and brush are gone; they are again on a main roadway. In the back seat Davy, freshly Band-aided, his wounded look gone, is occupied with a shrimp salad sandwich, his upper lip smeared with mayonnaise. Ben drives silently, Marian also silent beside him, fists clenched in her lap. Finally she speaks:

Cont.

MARIAN
(coldly)
You were impossibly rude.

BEN
Was I?
(beat)
Come on, baby...Someone ought
to go in there with a large
butterfly net.

MARIAN
They got carried away, that's all.

BEN
Not yet, they didn't.

INT. ROLFE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

56

They are both in bed and the "discussion" is still going on.

MARIAN
For once, be serious.

BEN
All right, serious.
(simply and firmly)
I don't like the house.

MARIAN
(laughing in disbelief)
Don't like it? For God's sake, why?

BEN
Jesus, Marian! You must've felt
it yourself. Those people --

MARIAN
Honey, we're renting the house,
not Miss Allardyce and her brother.

BEN
You don't rent an estate like
that for nine hundred dollars.

MARIAN
Why not? Maybe they don't need the
money, maybe it's more important
to have someone look after the place,
just be there. That's worth some
concession, isn't it?

Cont.

BEN

All right, maybe it is. But you still don't leave a ninety-year-old woman --

MARIAN

Eighty-five.

BEN

A hundred and eighty-five, what's the difference? You don't leave an old lady with total strangers. Christ, do you really want that kind of burden?

MARIAN

For that house? Yes, if those are the terms.

She turns away from him, pulling the sheet up around her neck. There is a long silence.

BEN

(quietly)

Marian?

(beat, no answer)

Does it really mean that much to you?

MARIAN

(not looking at him;
teary voiced)

You know it does.

(shifts a little
away from him)

I'll survive.

BEN

The question is...will I?

He puts his hand on her shoulder and lets it slide down to her hip.

MARIAN

It's hot, move to your own side.

He stares at her back.

BEN

(sighing)

All right, Marian, do you want me to call them?

30

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

57

There is a smile on her face. CAMERA TIGHTENS on her.

INT. ALLARDYCE DRAWING ROOM - CLOSE ON ANTIQUE
PHONE - DAY

58

It rings once. Twice. Three times. A woman's hand
ENTERS FRAME, picks up the scrolled ivory receiver.
ANGLE WIDENS.

ROZ

Allardyce...oh, yes, Mr. Rolfe!
Marvelous...Brother will be thrilled...
(as she looks o.s.)
July first? Why certainly, that'll
be just fine. We'll have everything
ready for you...bye-bye.

Hangs up phone as ANGLE WIDENS to INCLUDE Brother in b.g.
in his wheelchair. They look at each other.

EXT. SHORE ROAD - DAY

59

As the white car comes toward us it is piled high with
luggage. It slows, as it passes CAMERA, PAN WITH IT.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT - THE GROUP

60

Marian and Ben in front; David and ELIZABETH in back.
Elizabeth is around seventy; remarkable youthful, articulate.
Silk print dress, pearls; she smokes a cigarette in a short
ivory holder, wears large sunglasses. There are several
packages, suitcases crammed into the car.

BEN

(squinting through
the window)
You comfortable back there?

ELIZABETH

(smiling)
Heavens no! I feel like just about
everything in me has gone numb.

BEN

(grinning)
Except of course your mouth.

The old lady chuckles, but Marian slaps Ben's shoulder.

MARIAN

(repressing a smile)
Ben!

DAVID

There's the gates!

ANGLE FROM DRIVEWAY

31

as the Camaro makes the turn onto the tunnel-like road.

BACK TO GROUP IN CAR - MOVING SHOT

62

Ben shakes his head.

BEN

Stuff seems to be thicker than
last time. It's gonna need some
trimming.

INT. CAR - MOVING SHOT

63

Through the windshield, the house suddenly appears at the
end of the drive.

MARIAN

There it is! Look at it,
just look at it!

ELIZABETH

Good God!

She raises her sunglasses, is silent for a long moment,
then again:

ELIZABETH

Good God!

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

64

As the car pulls up and stops we see that the French windows
lining the terrace, and all the other windows in the house
are closed. Ben honks the horn a couple of times as they
pile out of the car.

BEN

(looking around)
Looks deserted.

Marian searches the face of the house, her eyes once again
stopping at the large rounded bay on the third floor.

MARIAN

It can't be...
(starts toward
the steps)
They probably didn't hear the horn.

ELIZABETH

(stretching)
I can't get over it.

Ben begins untying the canvas cover.

ANGLE AT FRONT DOOR

65

As Marian reaches the top of the steps, she sees a bulging envelope tacked to the door.

INSERT - ENVELOPE

66

It is addressed to "MR. AND MRS. ROLFE."

BACK TO MARIAN

67

as she opens the envelope, taking out a ring of keys and a sheaf of papers. She begins to read.

ANGLE ON BEN - AT CAR

68

BEN

(calling)

What's up?

Marian crosses back to the edge of the porch.

MARIAN

They had to leave.

BEN

Leave?

Ben drops the canvas and climbs past Elizabeth who has already puffed her way up eight steps. Marian hands him the letter. He begins to read:

BEN

(incredulously)

'Enjoy the house, and don't worry about anything. Arnold and Roz Allardyce.'

(looks at Marian)

Jesus Christ!

MARIAN

I know, it's crazy.

BEN

What if something goes wrong?

Where do we reach them?

Elizabeth arrives on the porch, breathing hard.

ELIZABETH

They do crazy things sometimes, old people.

Cont.

BEN

Crazy? They're a couple of steps beyond weird. What about the old lady?

MARIAN

I'd better look in on her.

She sifts through the keys, nine or ten of them, all neatly labelled, and picks out "Front Door."

BEN

(sarcastically)

You do that, she's all yours.

He hands her the envelope and turns to David who is carrying a pile of games and comics.

BEN

Okay, Dave, let's unload.

Marian opens the door. She and Elizabeth move into the hall first.

ELIZABETH

(looking at chandelier, etc.)

Oh, Marian, I don't believe it!

MARIAN

And it's all ours. Be right down.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - DAY

69

As Marian reaches the top of the staircase, she stops, looks down the long upstairs corridor.

HER P.O.V. - SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR

70

Wilting flowers in a vase; an empty pedestal a bit off balance; an obviously missing picture on the wall; stained, slightly peeling wallpaper; closed bedroom doors.

MOVING SHOT - MARIAN

71

As she walks slowly along the corridor, consulting the map left by the Allardyses; she stops at the foot of a short flight of stairs.

INT. THIRD FLOOR STAIRS - DOWN ANGLE

72

as Marian starts up the eight or ten steps TOWARD CAMERA. When she reaches the top, she finds a small entrance hall and a single set of closed double doors. She looks at her map again and then knocks. There is no answer.

MARIAN

Mrs. Allardyce?...It's

Marian Rolfe.

(beat)

We're the new tenants.

Still no answer. She tries the knob, opens the door.

INT. SITTING ROOM

73

as Marian enters, pausing in the doorway.

HER P.O.V. - THE ROOM

74

It is large and dim. Two pencil lines of bright sunlight cut through the not-quite-closed velvet drapes along the curved bay of windows at the end of the room. To the right: an enormous table covered in burgundy velvet, dominates the area. On it a mass of framed photos of varying size, some in round gold, others in squared silver. Near a bedroom door on the left wall is a gold wingchair, a small tea table set with a tray in front of it. The food on the tray is partially eaten.

BACK TO MARIAN

75

as she moves slowly into the room, looking around, absorbing it. She suddenly becomes aware of a SOUND: a HUM. It seems to be coming from the bedroom door. She moves to it.

ANGLE AT DOOR

76

It is massive, heavy, elaborately carved. The HUM is more pronounced here -- deep, constant. Marian is listening, moving her hand slowly over the carvings. Silence for several moments, except for the HUM. Her hand reaches a smooth surface; she knocks.

MARIAN

Mrs. Allardyce? Are you all right?

(waits)

Is there...anything you need?

Still only the HUM.

WIDER ANGLE

77

She half-shrugs, some concern. She comes away from the door; another look at the carvings. Then she moves to the curved bay windows; pulls the drapes wider and looks out.

MARIAN'S P.O.V.

35

78

The car in front of the house, Ben and David still unloading baggage. The HUM.

INT. ROOM

79

as Marian turns from the windows, her attention is drawn to the table of pictures.

HER P.O.V. - THE TABLE

80

Lighter now, the framed photographs gleam on the table. The silver and gold reflecting the light, so that there is a near halo rising around them.

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

81

as she bends lower for a closer look, CAMERA TIGHTENS on her. Awed by the display, she recalls Roz' words...

MARIAN

(softly)

...the memories of a lifetime...

CLOSE SHOT - THE PHOTOS

82

as the CAMERA PANS them: a mixture of sepia and color and black and white. Each of a single figure, some full length, some of faces only; every age seems to be represented, every style of dress, from turn of the century to the present. No two are alike. There is a color shot of a beautiful young woman, unsmiling, and next to her an older woman in a thirties-style dress, staring blankly into the camera, and a man, Ben's age, with a peculiar, almost stunned expression; an infant with her eyes closed, and older children, all of them strangely unsmiling. Suddenly, the CAMERA STOPS on one of the faces: an old man who stares out in absolute terror. Then another, a young boy, transfixed in fright. Then, a woman in a bonnet, agonized -- but all of them with one thing in common: that chilling quality only encountered in photos of the dead.

TIGHT SHOT - MARIAN

83

unsettled, yet fascinated by the photos. Suddenly o.s., the SOUND of Ben's voice.

BEN

(o.s., distant, calling
from below)

Hey! Marian! Where the hell
are you!

His voice breaks the "spell" and she blinks several times, sucks in a quick breath, hurriedly picks up the tray and EXITS the room.

CAMERA REMAINS in the room for a long moment, HOLDING on the closed bedroom door, as the HUM builds...builds...

INT. THIRD FLOOR STAIRS - DOWN ANGLE - BEN

as he looks up toward CAMERA. Marian comes down, bearing the tray of food.

BEN

(loudly; irritated)

What have you been doing up there?

MARIAN

Ssssshhhhh!

BEN

Is she okay? Did you talk to her?

MARIAN

She's asleep. I'll see her later.

In the b.g., Elizabeth ENTERS THE SHOT. Marian faces them.

MARIAN

Now, these stairs are out of bounds...

(nodding toward
third-floor steps)

...to everybody but me.

Mrs. Allardyce is my responsibility.

She's a very old lady and I don't
want anyone bothering her.

BEN

(in mock-hurt)

Crushing!

ANGLE ON DAVID

as he runs toward them.

DAVID

(excited)

You gotta see what I found in
the kitchen!

BEN

What'd you find, chief?

DAVID

C'mon, ...I'll show ya!

LOW ANGLE - MAIN STAIRCASE

as they come down TOWARD CAMERA, David bounding ahead.

ELIZABETH

None of the clocks are working.
Pity. They're all so lovely.

MARIAN
Probably need winding. Just
wait till I get started.

BEN
Yeah...she's just itching to
get into her kneepads and
jockstrap.

ELIZABETH
(feigning
shock)
Benjie!

INT. KITCHEN - TIGHT SHOT - REFRIGERATOR - DAY 87

as David's hand swings the double doors wide. The shelves
are packed with cold meats, vegetables, fresh milk --
including a strawberry pie and two bottles of champagne.

REACTION SHOTS - BEN, MARIAN AND ELIZABETH. 88

A chorus of "ahs" as they stare at the goodies.

ANOTHER ANGLE 89

as Ben reaches in to lift out a bottle of champagne. Marian
smiling behind him.

MARIAN
(needling Ben)
Weird, huh?...crazy...

BEN
(lifting the bottle)
This kind of crazy I can
live with!

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - FULL SHOT - NIGHT 90

The house looms up, white and massive...lights on in the
upstairs second-story windows. In the curved bay of the
Allardyce suite, one floor above, a faint red glow can be
seen behind the heavy drapes of the sitting room.

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON MARIAN - NIGHT 91

An antique crystal hurricane lamp glows crimson by the
window. As Marian picks up the tray of food outside
Mrs. Allardyce's bedroom door, we note it is untouched.
Marian looks concerned, leans close to the door (in the
HUM) and seems about to speak, but decides against it.
She tiptoes quietly out of the suite.

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM - ANGLE ON BEN - NIGHT

92

The bedroom is beautifully furnished, with a carved Queen Anne highboy, a Newport desk, rosewood tables, a great canopy-top bed in heavy oak. Ben is lying on the bed in his shorts, reading a Henry James novel, as Marian enters. He looks up at her.

BEN

What took you so long?

MARIAN

(vaguely)

Things.

She goes into the bathroom, leaving the door ajar. SOUND of running water.

BEN

Davy's been bugging me about the pool...I tried to fix it this afternoon, but the filter's gone. Have to get a new one when I go into town.

Marian comes out of the bathroom wearing a short blue nightgown, goes over to check the window as Ben watches.

BEN

How's the old lady?

Marian hesitates.

MARIAN

Fine.

BEN

(patting the
sheet next to
him)

Come to bed.

ANGLE AT BED

93

as she kicks off her slippers and slides into the bed, lying on her back. Ben moves to her, his hand sliding through her hair and under the lace-trim of the gown.

BEN

(softly)

You're over-dressed.

She rolls away from him, gently.

MARIAN

(mildly protesting)

Please, no, honey...not
tonight...I'm really tired...

But he persists, and she sits half-up against the pillow, allowing him to slip off the thin nightgown. She sighs...

DISSOLVE TO:

39

CLOSE SHOT - BEN AND MARIAN

94

Now they are deeply involved in lovemaking, with Ben's face buried against her neck as he drives himself into her. He is obviously on the verge of orgasm.

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN'S FACE

95

as she stares up at the ceiling. CAMERA TIGHTENS to her eyes; they are cold, passionless, as if she were actually repulsed by the act. She seems to be holding her breath, waiting for Ben's climax.

INT. ROLFE BATHROOM - CLOSE ON SHOWER SPRAY - NIGHT 96

As the water pounds from the shower head, CAMERA PANS DOWN to reveal Marian as she scrubs, scrubs, scrubs. CAMERA TIGHTENS to her eyes. They are blank and expressionless.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SWEEP OF ALLARDYCE LAWN - FRONT OF HOUSE - 97
CLOSE SHOT - PAINTING - DAY

The painting of a sun-splashed wooded scene, done in water-colors. CAMERA PANS LEFT to include Elizabeth seated in front of her easel, brush in hand, paints beside her. The great house sprawls in the b.g. O.s. SOUND of approaching car. RACK FOCUS to the white Camaro as it ENTERS FRAME coming up the drive toward the house. Elizabeth waves as it goes by.

INT. FOYER - HIGH ANGLE FROM TOP OF STAIRS 98

Marian in f.g. is running an old electric stand-up Hoover vacuum cleaner over the carpet at the top of the stairs. In the foyer below, a magnificent Oriental rug now covers the once-scuffed flooring. Surrounding the rug, the dark wood is waxed to a high gloss. The front door opens as Ben and David come in, carrying their shopping bags. Ben reacts to the "new" foyer.

BEN

(calling over the whine
of the vacuum cleaner)

Hey, slave!

Marian turns, sees them below, clicks off the machine.

BEN

Jesus! What have you been doing?

...Place looks incredible.

(beat, nods toward
rug under his feet)

Where'd you get this?

ANGLE ON MARIAN

99

coming down the stairs, grinning smugly.

MARIAN

You like it? That's the one
that was rolled up against the wall.

MARIAN (Cont.)

(a beat)
It's worth a fortune!

BEN

You did all this since we left?

MARIAN

And more upstairs...

(a beat)
How's the town?

BEN

Swinging...the capital of Nowhere.

ANOTHER ANGLE

100

as she moves past them to a large wall mirror; spraying it with Windex, begins polishing.

MARIAN

(still rubbing)

You can put those sacks in the kitchen.

As they start out of the foyer, Ben turns back to her.

BEN

Coming down to watch me try and fix
the pool? Should be a lot of laughs.

Marian shakes her head, finds a new spot to wipe:

MARIAN

Busy...busy...busy!

As they exit, CAMERA HOLDS on her image in the mirror...as she shines and polishes.

EXT. POOL - FULL SHOT - DAY

101

The pool is in very bad shape; the water is opaque, brown and muddy, littered with dead leaves and branches; the runners are rusted, the tile and concrete cracked and broken. Ben has his filter-repair equipment spread around him, Elizabeth sits smoking a cigarette in b.g. as David circles impatiently. Suddenly, with a RUSTY GURGLE, the filter begins to PUMP and HUM.

DAVID

(happily)

Hey, you got it, Dad!

ELIZABETH

(waving her ivory holder)

Benjie you're a mechanical genius!

DAVID

How soon can we swim?

Cont.

BEN

Are you kidding? I have to use a
net to get most of the big junk out.
It'll take at least a week.

The filter suddenly stops with a BELCH.

BEN

Hmmm...

(going back to work
on it, smiling)

Did I say a week?

David giggles. Ben makes another adjustment and it starts
working again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODS - WIDE ANGLE - BEN AND DAVID - DAY 102

They tramp through the shimmering green woods. Davy slapping
at the brush with his "walking stick" (a stripped tree branch).
There is a warm BUZZ of insects, the stir of a summer breeze.

ANOTHER ANGLE 103

as they crest a small, grassy hill, look down.

DAVID

Hey...a graveyard!

THEIR P.O.V. 104

A weed-infested family cemetery just beyond a grove of golden
weeping willows. The grave markers are old, weathered,
tilted at odd angles.

ANGLE ON BEN AND DAVID 105

as they enter the cemetery, peering at the various markers.

CLOSE SHOT - GRAVESTONES 106

Ben squats down to clear away bits of overgrowth from the
stones. Several of them read: "ALLARDYCE" -- no other
name. No date.

DAVID'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Hey, Dad!...Come over and see
what I found!

ANGLE ON DAVID 107

standing beside a patch of heavy brush as Ben joins him.

THEIR P.O.V. 108

A child's three-wheeler, half-rusted away, one of the wheels
missing, the frame cracked.

BACK TO SCENE

109

David is fascinated and plainly a bit "spooked" by the cemetery. As he peers closer at the bicycle, Ben hunches over in a crouch, twists up his features into an Igor-like face.

BEN

(in thick stage accent)

Liddle boy...would you like some candy?

David whoops in play-terror, backing away.

BEN

Vere are you goink, liddle boy?

Don't be afraid...

FULL SHOT - THE PAIR

110

as Ben, running like a deformed dwarf and GRUNTING crazily, chases a delighted, squealing David up and over the hill. CAMERA HOLDS on the old tricycle.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON TRAY - NIGHT

111

The silver tray of food on the tea table fills f.g. of FRAME; the linen napkin unfolded, silverware untouched, and the food uneaten. We see Marian enter TOWARD CAMERA, and stop by the tray. She looks down at it, disturbed. (HUM, as always, penetrates the room.)

ANOTHER ANGLE

112

as she starts to pick up the tray, hesitates, puts it down firmly, turns to the bedroom door, takes a deep breath, knocks on the wood.

MARIAN

Mrs. Allardyce...are you all right?

(beat)

I've...been very worried. We've been here over a week now and you've barely eaten a thing.

(a beat, just the HUM)

I don't understand...is it because you don't like what I've been bringing you? It's what Roz told me to give you.

(beat)

Do you go down to the kitchen at night? Is that what you've been doing?

Still no answer.

MARIAN

Mrs. Allardyce, please! If you would at least talk to me...

Still no reply. Just the HUM. Marian waits for another moment, sighs, picks up the tray and exits, closing the sitting room door behind her. We stay on the bedroom door, with the HUM, and we see the scrolled knob begin to turn, ever so slowly. The knob is still turning as we:

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

113

Marian is preparing Mrs. Allardyce's lunch tray as Ben comes bounding in. He is wearing a bathing suit and a terrycloth pullover. His face and arms are burned a light pink.

BEN

When're you coming out to play?

MARIAN

Soon. How are the folks?

He takes two cream sodas and a ginger ale out of the refrigerator.

BEN

I swear, Elizabeth just dropped another ten years.

He looks at the tray.

BEN

What's she look like...our Mrs. Allardyce?

MARIAN

(a beat, hesitates)

What does any very old woman look like?
Very old...that's how she looks.

BEN

She's still not eating?

This startles her, and she "freezes." She turns to face him.

MARIAN

(lying, a bit worried)

Not...a lot...but some...

He looks at her.

BEN

Hey, c'mon...don't worry about her.

(beat)

I had a grandma that used to do the same thing. Bottom drawer of her dresser had to be emptied regularly.

(laughs)

Usta' find all kinds of things -- candy wrappers, stale cookies, dried sausage skins...you name it.

He shakes his head, then parodies an old lady's belch. She slaps him playfully.

MARIAN

(laughing)

Stop that!

Cont.

BEN

(grabbing her hands)
Look, how about putting on that new bikini? The time has finally arrived, it's pool day.

MARIAN

I will, as soon as I get the library ready for you.

BEN

(needling)
Don't you ever let up?
We never see you any more!

MARIAN

(tries to suppress
a guilty smile)
I've just been...straightening up a bit.

He draws her closer and lets his eyes travel over her face.

BEN

(affectionately)
Paleface...you'll never change.
(looks at her hair)
Correction.

MARIAN

What's wrong?

BEN

(touching her left temple)
You're getting old, baby.

MARIAN

(appalled)
A gray hair!

BEN

(separating the strands)
More than one.

She pushes him away, heads for a mirror.

ANGLE ON MARIAN - AT MIRROR

114

Her fingers sweep through her hair. A number of gray strands can be seen at both temples.

MARIAN

My God!

He crosses to her, takes her in his arms, begins to comfort her, stroking her hair.

BEN

Poor baby, poor baby...

MARIAN

Oh, Ben...

Cont.

BEN

Relax, honey.
 (smiling)
 You know I dig old broads.

MARIAN

(pushing him away)
 Oh, shut up, smart ass!

BEN

(laughing, starts
 for the door)
 I'll see you down at the pool.

CAMERA HOLDS ON Marian as she watches him go. Then, she turns and looks in the mirror again.

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

115

As Marian ENTERS with the lunch tray, she suddenly stops, reacts to something o.s.

HER P.O.V. - GOLD WINGCHAIR AND BREAKFAST TRAY

116

No longer in their usual place, they are now nearer to the closed door.

ANGLE ON MARIAN

117

as she quickly crosses to examine the tray. The napkin has been unfolded and is draped across the tray. For the first time, a substantial amount has been eaten.

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

118

as she smiles in obvious relief; then gently touching the remnants on the tray, she looks toward the closed door, remembering the reverence of Roz and Brother.

MARIAN

(softly, with
 great affection)
 Our darling.

EXT. POOL - DAY

119

Assembled on the tiled area: Elizabeth, sitting under a faded beach umbrella, starting to blow air into a large rubber whale; David, in bathing trunks, carrying a pair of rubber flippers, and a face mask, hanging loose around his neck; and Ben, now with only his trunks on, crouching by the edge of the pool, drawing a long net through the water. Although not clear, the water doesn't look too bad.

DAVID

Where's Mom? She said she was coming.

Cont.

BEN
You know your mother.
(to Elizabeth,
calling)
How's your wind holding out?

She pinches the nozzle, taking it from her mouth.

ELIZABETH
(calling back to him)
Not what it used to be.

BEN
You smoke too much.

ELIZABETH
I know, and I drink too much
and I'm a lecherous old lady.
I'll never make eighty.

DAVID
(watching his
father intently)
If you put in chlorine it kills
the germs.

BEN
Who's worried about germs...
it's the lousy sea serpent
I'm after.

DAVID
(laughs)
Can I go in now?

Ben looks o.s. in the direction of the house.

HIS P.O.V. - THE HOUSE

120

in the distance, huge and bright with sunlight, it sprawls
above the sweep of lawn. There is no sign of Marian.

BACK TO SCENE

121

as Ben turns to David.

BEN
Why don't you go see if you
can find your mother, first.

CAMERA HOLDS on Ben as David runs o.s. in the direction of
the house.

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

122

As Marian starts to leave the room with the tray, she pauses at the table of photos, puts down the tray, removes a dustcloth, picks up one framed photo to dust it; then another. She slips down into a chair by the table and begins dusting and wiping all the frames.

DAVID'S VOICE

(o.s., faint; from
second floor)

Hey...Mom, are you up there?
It's time to go swimming with us...
Mom...

Marian, in the HUMMING ROOM, raises her head, slowly brushing her hair back against her temples; she seems to be listening to David's voice, calling her -- but soon "loses" herself again in the collection of photos, dusting, brushing, rearranging.

BACK TO POOL AREA

123

as David comes running.

DAVID

(to Ben)

I can't find her.

BEN

(shaking his head)

Okay, chief, get your tube on.

In the b.g., Elizabeth has just completed blowing up the whale. Suddenly David jumps at her. She lets out a howl, and the whale balloon pops out of her hands, whips into the sky, with a HISS of escaping air.

ELIZABETH

(laughing)

David!

David, laughing, grabs his tube, jumps into the shallow end of the pool.

ANGLE AT DIVING BOARD

124

as Ben tests it, moving to the end. It is stiff, creaky. He bounces a few times, it groans threateningly as he dives.

ANGLE AT BOTTOM OF POOL

125

In the f.g., a pair of eyeglasses, rusting. Ben's figure in the b.g., swimming underwater TOWARD CAMERA. He sees the glasses gleaming, descends deeper, grabs them, and surfaces.

ANGLE ON SURFACE FROM EDGE

126

Ben comes up, holding the glasses. Swims to the edge to examine them.

CLOSE ON EYEGLASSES

127

glittering in Ben's hands. One lens is intact, but there is a small jagged hole in the middle of the second lens, as though something had been plunged through it.

DAVID'S VOICE

(o.s.)
Hey, Dad!

WIDER ANGLE

128

to include David in water.

DAVID

I'm comin' out there!

BEN

(puts the glasses
down, warning)

Oh, no, you're not! You're gonna stay at that end!

DAVID

I got my tube. Besides, I can swim!

He begins to move toward Ben.

ELIZABETH

David, that's deep water.
Now stop showing off.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CLOSE ON MARIAN

129

A strange look on her face as she lovingly polishes and shines the glittering frames.

EXT. POOL - DAY

130

as David is still splashing toward Ben.

BEN

Okay, wise guy!

He swims toward David, ducks underwater, dives, pops up noisily beside the boy.

DAVID

(pretending fright)
It's the sea serpent!

And he tries to swim away from Ben, who again comes up under him, this time lifting him out of the water on his shoulders. David squeals, flailing the air with both arms as Ben flips him.

ELIZABETH

(calling out)

Ben, no!

David surfaces, gasping.

BEN

(laughing)

How's that grab you, hunh, Tarzan?

David coughs, rubbing his eyes, laughs, despite himself.

CLOSE SHOT - ELIZABETH

131

She starts crossing to the edge of the pool.

ELIZABETH

(calling)

All right, you two, that's enough now. Benjie, you're worse than a child.

ANGLE ON BEN AND DAVID

132

Ben plunges under, spreading David's legs and again lifts him high on his shoulders.

DAVID

(beginning to panic)

No more, Dad!

Ben doesn't seem to hear; he is moving backwards into the deeper water as David holds on tighter, his fingers digging into the sides of his father's face.

DAVID

(pleading)

I give up!

(fear in his voice)

Dad, I give up!

CLOSE ON ELIZABETH

133

She is getting upset.

ELIZABETH

Ben, you're frightening the boy!

WIDER ANGLE

134

BEN
I've got him. You're not
afraid, are you, sport? Not
while I've got you.

DAVID
(whining)
Lemme go! I don't like this
game.

BEN
(breathing hard)
Why not? Why don't you like it?

Before David can answer, Ben slams him backwards into the
water with great violence.

INT. SITTING ROOM - CLOSE ON MARIAN

135

as she slowly rubs, polishes and shines, rubs, polishes and
shines, her expression now, almost hypnotic.

EXT. POOL - CLOSE ON BEN

136

There is an intense, strange expression on his face as he
moves toward David again.

CLOSE ON ELIZABETH

137

standing helplessly on the ledge, her hands raised to her
mouth.

ELIZABETH
(shouting)
What are you doing?

BACK TO POOL

138

Ben is hard-faced, eyes glittering.

BEN
Just a little roughhouse.
Right, Dave? Right?

David is choking, the water boiling around him as he tries
to pull away from his father. His face-mask has come off,
its band now wound around his wrist.

BEN
(awful threat
in his voice)
Davy knows it's all a game.

David is choking for air, as Ben grabs for him again, but
he kicks himself free and then, with more strength than he
has ever used in his life, swings his arm viciously,
slamming Ben in the mouth with his mask.

51

CLOSE ON BEN 139

as he cries out, covering his face with his hands.

ANGLE ON DAVID 140

Struggling for breath, he flounders to a white-faced Elizabeth. As she pulls him out, she is barely able to hold him for the trembling in herself.

ELIZABETH

Ben! Ben!

ANGLE ON BEN 141

as he stays in the water staring back at her, blood streaming from his nose and mouth. CAMERA TIGHTENS to his eyes. They are shocked and fearful.

ANGLE ON DAVID AND ELIZABETH 142

David has his head buried in her chest, his small body shaking with great sobs.

ANGLE ON POOL SURFACE 143

as the blood, billowing, spreads itself.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM - NIGHT 144

Ben and Marian are in bed. She is sound asleep but he seems to be caught in mid-nightmare, tortured breaths burst from his chest. His mouth gapes open. CAMERA TIGHTENS TO HIM.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE: (NOTE: ALL DREAM SEQUENCES WILL BE WITHOUT SOUND, MUSIC ONLY.)

INT. APARTMENT HOUSE STAIRWAY - ANGLE ON 145
YOUNG BEN, AUNT, UNCLE AND FATHER - DAY

Ben is twelve, sad-looking, moving down the stairs ahead of his FATHER, also grim-faced, an AUNT and UNCLE follow. All are dressed in black. They reach a door at the bottom of the stairs, open it, step out.

THEIR P.O.V. 146

A long black limo (vintage 1955) waits at the curb, motor idling, a CHAUFFEUR standing by the car's door. He is tall, thin, sharp-featured, his face pocked; he wears sunglasses which shield his eyes under a black, peaked chauffeur's cap.

ANGLE ON YOUNG BEN 147

staring at the man.

52

ANGLE ON CHAUFFEUR 148

as he opens the rear door, stands looking directly at Ben.

ANGLE ON YOUNG BEN 149

He doesn't want to enter the limo. Draws back. His father nudges him forward -- into the limo, the door slamming shut behind them.

CUT TO:

BACK TO BEN IN BED - TIGHT SHOT - HIS FACE 150

his eyes squeezed closed, sweating, gasping for breath, trapped in the nightmare.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - ANGLE AT GRAVE - DAY 151

Several family members including the Aunt and Uncle circle the coffin (containing Ben's mother) which is being lowered into the ground. A few of the mourners scatter flowers over the descending coffin as a minister intones (M.O.S.) in b.g. Ben and his father stand by, watching, tears in their eyes. Suddenly Ben raises his head and looks o.s.

HIS P.O.V. 152

A hearse and two black limos are parked at the edge of the road near the plot. Two of the chauffeurs, back to CAMERA, are joking together, laughing softly to one another.

CLOSE ON BEN 153

glaring in anger at them.

BACK TO CHAUFFEURS 154

As one turns and sees that Ben is staring at them, he quickly falls silent -- but then the other chauffeur turns and we see it is the one with dark glasses. He meets Ben's gaze with a cold, chilling smile.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - CLOSE ON BEN 155

As he comes awake with a start, ANGLE WIDENS. Ben gets out of bed, quietly. Marian continues to sleep soundly.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - ANGLE ON BEN - NIGHT

156

He stands smoking, in the dim light-circle cast by an old-fashioned standing lamp, begins to pace. Outside, a light rain has begun to fall.

MARIAN'S VOICE

(o.s., quietly)

Ben...

He turns to face her as she stands in the living room doorway, a green silk robe over her nightgown.

MARIAN

It's after two.

BEN

Is it?

He sits down, flicking ashes into a rose medallion bowl.

MARIAN

Did you sleep at all?

BEN

Some.

MARIAN

Want to come back and try again?

BEN

In a while maybe.

She comes over to his chair, stands near him, notices the ashes in the bowl and on the table, brushes them off.

MARIAN

You don't have to smoke in here do you?

BEN

(slightly irritated)

Why...is it wrong for the room?

She smiles, lets it pass, lowers herself to the rug, looks up at him.

MARIAN

You didn't mean to hurt Davy...

(a beat)

The roughhouse just got out of hand...

BEN

Roughhouse...

(his voice gets hard)

You weren't there, for Chrissake!

He stubs out his cigarette in hard, stabbing motions.

MARIAN
(guiltily)
No...I wasn't.

BEN
I...can't get it out of my head.
Christ, it's all I can think about.

MARIAN
I told you, Ben...you didn't
mean to --

BEN
(flares)
The hell I didn't! I wanted
to hurt him!

MARIAN
You're just punishing yourself.
Davy's all right. He's all right.

Ben gets up, paces, lights another cigarette, puts it quickly out -- while Marian watches him.

BEN
What if this is...a lot more
serious than you think it is?
(a beat)
Suppose it's starting again.

She turns, looks at him.

MARIAN
What?

BEN
Marian, I never told you this
but when I was a kid...

She looks at him.

BEN
Well, I think I had a breakdown.

MARIAN
A breakdown? Oh Ben, I'm sure...

Cont.

BEN

(cutting her off)

No, it happened.

(beat)

It was right after my mother died
and I began to have these God-awful
nightmares about her funeral.

Beat; she looks at him.

BEN

Finally it got so bad that my
father had to send me 'away'
for about a year before I got
over it.

MARIAN

But honey, that was a long time
ago...

BEN

(quietly)

I know. And I haven't had that
dream since...

(beat; he looks
at her)

Until tonight.

She looks at him, brushes her cheek against his.

MARIAN

Ben, the past...remember, we
packed it away. We left it back
in town with the piano and the
Supervisor.

(beat, very quietly)

There's nothing wrong with you...
absolutely nothing...

He doesn't answer, just stares out at the night. CAMERA
TIGHTENS on Marian. There is a very troubled look on her
face.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TERRACE - EARLY MORNING

157

as Marian enters from the French doors, carrying a cup of
coffee. The terrace is wet with puddles and the lawn,
reaching down to the bay, sparkles a little greener. She
stands for a moment looking o.s. in the direction of the
pool. Then, putting the cup on the balustrade, she starts
out toward it.

LONG LENS SHOT - MARIAN

158

as she walks over the cool, wet grass toward the pool.
Suddenly she stops on a small rise.

MARIAN'S P.O.V. - THE POOL

159

In the morning sun, a transformation; the pool is now a sweet, clear blue; the metal rails descending into it are polished and shining; the tile bordering it is no longer cracked. An amazing change has taken place during the night. Even the HUM of the pool's filter is strong and steady.

ANGLE ON MARIAN

160

As she walks to the edge staring, trying to absorb the "miracle," there is a very worried look on her face.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

161

As the door opens TOWARD CAMERA, Ben and Marian enter.

MARIAN

(sings out)

TA-DAaaa...

(beat, smiling

proudly)

It's all yours...like it?

Cont.

The room is done beautifully. An oval Hepplewhite desk, his reference books placed on it, stands near the window. More textbooks are stacked on the big mahogany table nearby. A soft-leather chair with a lamp next to it flanks the desk, and his typewriter and attache case are in evidence, with fresh typing paper and sharpened pencils.

He gives her a kiss, walks to the desk, runs his hand along the red leather top.

BEN
(trying for some
enthusiasm)
Baby, it's great.

MARIAN
I took away the TV set. It's
wrong for the room anyway...
(laughs
self-consciously)
...you should forgive the
expression.

She walks up behind him, puts her arms around his waist, hugs him.

BEN
(sighing)
Now, if we could just think of
something for me to do.

MARIAN
You've got loads to do and now
is a good time as any to start
working on your Master's...
(pulling him around
to her; voice suddenly
very intense)
It's okay, Benjie...isn't it?

BEN
The room?

MARIAN
Everything. Yesterday's a long
time ago and we can pretend it
never existed. Let's start over,
huh?

ANGLE AT LIBRARY DOOR

162

as Elizabeth APPEARS, carrying her painting box; she looks a little tired. David stands next to her. He is nervous, solemn-faced.

Cont.

ELIZABETH
(looking over the "den")
Well...isn't this nice!
(beat)
David has decided to take up
painting. We're off to search out
a view.

BEN
(eyes on David,
uneasy)
Hi, Dave.

DAVID
(very softly, eyes
not meeting Ben's)
Hi.

BEN
How's everything?

DAVID
Okay.

MARIAN
(putting an arm around
David, nudges him
forward)
Did you take your paints, sweetheart?

DAVID
(eyes on Ben)
No.

BEN
(puts out his hand)
Friends again, sport?

ANGLE ON DAVID

163

DAVID
Oh Daddy!

As David rushes into his father's arms, Ben pulls him close.

DAVID
I don't ever want to go back
to that pool again!

BEN
Don't worry, chief...you won't
have to.

ANGLE ON MARIAN

164

as she watches, relieved, knowing that the pool's
transformation will no longer be an immediate threat.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE - SERIES OF SHOTS

165-
169(NOTE: Only music in these scenes, all else M.O.S.)

- A. Marian hanging a gilt-framed mirror in the Allardyce sitting room which now also contains an enameled chest, Chinese bowls, Dresden figurines, delicate Venetian glass...and masses of flowers.
- B. Ben alone in his study, sweating, trying to write, balling up paper in frustration, staring morosely out the window.
- C. Marian, cleaning, working, then deep in the basement, rummaging; she discovers an old wicker wheelchair.
- D. Elizabeth and David exploring. Elizabeth tiring, sits down exhausted; David laughing at her.
- E. NIGHT SEQUENCE: Marian, delighted to find that more food has been eaten on the Allardyce tray -- happily picking up the tray and carrying it out.

CUT TO:

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM - NIGHT

170

As Marian enters, it is after midnight. She finds the room empty. Ben's side of the bed is rumpled, his clothes thrown on the chair. She walks toward the window, looks out, then turns and exits the room.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

171

There is a single lightbulb on, hanging at the door of the poolhouse which is gray and shadowy against the vague outline of trees. Ben stands at the edge of the pool, his white terrycloth robe catching the pale light. As Marian appears in the b.g., she stops and watches him for a moment.

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

172

She doesn't know if he's noticed the change.

MARIAN

(calling out, nervously)

Ben...

ANGLE ON BEN

173

As Marian walks up beside him:

MARIAN

(slips her hand
under his arm)

I don't like going to bed without you.

He doesn't look at her, moves away, walks along the edge
of the pool, looking at the water.

BEN

(quietly)

It's a while since I've been
down here.

MARIAN

I know.

Suddenly, he stops, listens.

BEN

Filter's still going.

She crosses to him, smiling.

MARIAN

A tribute to your genius.

BEN

(really noticing for
the first time)

And the rest of it! It's all...

MARIAN

(quickly laughing)

Smell the lemon oil?

(sniffs loudly)

I polished the chrome, plucked the
weeds, scrubbed the concrete...

He stares at the water again. She looks at him.

MARIAN

What is it, baby?

BEN

(takes a deep breath)

I wanted to come down here, just
to see if I could.

MARIAN

I thought we'd forgotten about all that.

Cont.

BEN

We tried.

(shakes his head
sympathetically)You really stuck yourself with
something of a kook.

MARIAN

Well, that makes two of us.

She puts her arm around him, snuggles her head into his
chest, nods at the water.

MARIAN

It looks marvelous, why don't
you jump in.

BEN

You come with me.

MARIAN

I don't have my suit.

BEN

(loud whisper)
Go bare-assed.

MARIAN

Ben!

She looks toward the house as though it might have overheard
him.

BEN

What if I go first?

Without waiting for a reply, he pulls off his robe and dives
in, surfaces.

BEN

(calling)
Well? Come on!

A pause.

MARIAN

(finally relenting)
Oh, why not?

She starts to slip out of her clothes.

BEN

(laughing)
Everything.

MARIAN

Will it aid in the therapy?

BEN

(smiling)

It'll aid a lot.

She dives in, surfaces and swims toward him. As she reaches him, the water is just below their chests. He leans back, letting her body slide against his and then wraps his arms around her.

BEN

(quietly)

Seems like an awfully long time
between visits. I've missed them.

He presses closer, gives her a long, quiet look, then kisses her. He starts moving against her, his touch becoming more pleasurable and seductive. He tries to kiss her again, but her arms stiffen against his chest.

MARIAN

None of that stuff now.

He bends low, bringing the water up to their necks.

BEN

(innocently)

Just a little harmless water sport,
something to get the circulation going.

MARIAN

(smiling)

My circulation's fine.

She wriggles free and swims toward the edge. Pulls herself out of the pool.

BEN

(calling)

Hey! Come on back in.

MARIAN

(laughing)

Not on your life.

She picks up his robe, starts to dry off. He climbs out, crosses to her.

Cont.

BEN

You know, I don't get it. I'm not saying it's got to be fireworks after nine years, but -- at least a vestige of excitement.

She lets him brush the wet strands of hair away from her face and pass his thumbs over her eyebrows.

BEN

I keep trying to figure out what it is that's made me so repulsive all of a sudden.

MARIAN

(smiling)

You're not repulsive. You're incredibly sexy.

She gives him a quick kiss on the mouth and he begins to take her in his arms again.

He blows in her ear, kisses her neck and finally she begins to let go. CAMERA TIGHTENS on her. Suddenly, she reacts to something o.s.

HER P.O.V. - THE HOUSE

174

In the distance silhouetted against the moonlit sky, the dim glow from the red draped windows prominent at the top of the house.

BACK TO SCENE

175

as Ben tries to kiss her. She averts her face.

MARIAN

Ben, please, I really don't want to.

Not listening, he begins to gently lower her to the grass forcing her onto her back.

MARIAN

(urgent)

Ben, no!!

(twisting under him,
trying to pull away,
her voice rising)

Not here! You can't. Not here!

BEN

(a plea)

Marian, for God's sake!

He squirms between her legs, tries to force his mouth on hers.

MARIAN

(crying out)

Don't you understand? You can't.

You can't!

Suddenly, he stops, looks down at her. She closes her eyes.

MARIAN

(a whisper)

Please!

Abruptly, he allows her to roll free of him, then lies away from her, staring in cold anger at the night sky.

WIDER ANGLE

176

as Marian stands up, pushing her hair back against her temples, pulling the robe tight around her. In b.g., Ben raises himself, faces the pool.

MARIAN

(quietly)

I'm sorry.

He shrugs, avoiding her eyes.

BEN

(toneless)

There's nothing to be sorry about,
Marian.

MARIAN

It's just that...

(hesitates)

It's not the same.

BEN

It hasn't been for some time.

(casually)

That happens, I suppose.

He raises himself slowly and faces the pool.

BEN

I promise I won't put you in
that kind of situation again.
Go back to the house, Marian.
I'll be up later.

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON MARIAN - NIGHT

177

As Marian enters, it is obvious that she is very upset. She stands for a moment looking around, almost not knowing why she is there, then as the HUM surrounds her, she settles into the gold wingchair by the closed bedroom door, shuts her eyes, and allows the insulated peace of the room to wash over her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - ANGLE ON BEN - DAY

178

He's standing at the sink, drinking a cup of coffee as Marian enters, arms full of silver cups, bowls, goblets...

BEN

(dully)

Where'd you find those?

MARIAN

Hall closet. This house is
full of treasures.

BEN

(voice level, edged)

You didn't come to bed at all
last night.

MARIAN

(putting the silver down)

No...after we...after the pool...I
went up to the sitting room to see
if Mrs. Allardyce needed anything...
and I fell asleep in her wingchair...

(beat)

Didn't mean to...It just happened.
Guess I was pretty tired.

They stare at each other for a long moment, each wanting to break down the sudden "wall" between them, but cannot find the words. Finally, Ben turns to go.

MARIAN

Where are you going?

BEN

(dully)

I don't know...Maybe I'll work
on the driveway.

MARIAN

(overly bright)

Good idea! Might get rid of
some of that scholar's pallor.

He exits. CAMERA HOLDS on Marian as she watches him go.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DOWN ANGLE - DAY

179

CAMERA LOOKS DOWN on Ben, as he slashes away with a scythe at the dense mass of green foliage which has overgrown the gravel driveway. We see the Camaro parked about ten feet in back of him; Ben's shirt hanging from the car's aerial. Laid out on a blanket on the hood: clipping shears, a hacking knife and a small portable electric saw. We can see that the trees have spread their branches across both sides of the driveway, narrowing it considerably. Wild new growth is everywhere. Sun flashes off the blade of Ben's scythe as he works, bare-chested in heavy garden gloves, sweating in the heat, slashed branches falling around his feet.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

180

It is noon, by the old-fashioned kitchen clock, as Marian enters with a pot of geraniums. She puts it in the sun on the windowsill over the sink. In b.g. Elizabeth enters. She seems worn; her eyes are watery, tired-looking. Her smile is strained. Marian turns.

MARIAN

And what happend to you? It's almost time for lunch.

ELIZABETH

Goodness! Can't anyone ever oversleep in this family?

Marian washes her hands in the sink.

MARIAN

Just isn't like you, that's all. You've got more energy than any of us.

ELIZABETH

Had. I'm afraid this summer vacation is wearing me out.

She sits down at the kitchen table, sighs wearily.

MARIAN

(at the sink)

Too much sun. Maybe you should try painting in the shade.

Elizabeth picks up an antique sewing mirror from the table, peers at her image, makes a wry face.

ANGLE ON HER IMAGE IN MIRROR

181

It is drawn and haggard, her hair, thin and shapeless, washing from grey to an old lady's white.

ELIZABETH'S VOICE

(o.s.)

My God! Do I need a trip to the beauty parlor...

BACK TO ELIZABETH

182

as she looks at Marian:

ELIZABETH

Marian, I'm not the only one who could use a beauty parlor. You're getting quite a bit of gray in your hair...

CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

183

We see that indeed Elizabeth is right. Marian's hair is no longer just gray at the temples, but it is slightly streaked along the top.

MARIAN

(touching her hair,
smiling)

I know, I'm probably taking after my Aunt Mary. She went entirely gray by the time she was thirty-three.

(beat)

Hey! I just remembered. David's been looking for you. You promised to go with him to the beach.

Elizabeth laughs, shaking her head.

MARIAN

What's funny?

ELIZABETH

Me! Know what I really want to do right now?

MARIAN

No...what?

ELIZABETH

Go right back up to bed. Isn't that awful?

MARIAN

Certainly not...go ahead and take a little nap. Be good for you.

ELIZABETH

(sighs, stands up)

Maybe I will.

And, as the old woman leaves, CAMERA HOLDS on Marian. Her face is clouded with concern.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDROOM

184

As the door opens, Elizabeth enters and settles wearily onto the bed, kicking off her slippers, and closing her eyes. Then, abruptly, she sits up, making an effort.

ELIZABETH

No, dammit! No! I will not!

She gets up, angry at herself, begins prowling the room.

HER P.O.V.

185

her latest painting, unframed, propped against the antique dressing table.

ANGLE AT TABLE

186

as she walks over to it, stands looking down at it. She nods, reaches to pick it up.

INT. SECOND-FLOOR CORRIDOR

187

as Elizabeth comes TOWARD CAMERA, carrying her painting; she stops to catch her breath at the foot of the stairs leading to the third floor.

DOWN ANGLE - FROM THIRD-FLOOR LANDING

188

As Elizabeth starts to climb, each successive step becomes more difficult.

CLOSE SHOT - ELIZABETH

189

as she grips the bannister, her arm shaking with the terrible effort.

ELIZABETH

(self-reprimand)

For heaven's sake, Elizabeth,
what's wrong with you?

ANGLE AT SITTING ROOM DOOR

190

As Elizabeth ENTERS FRAME, she leans heavily against the wall, breathing hard. CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment; finally she regains her composure, knocks.

ELIZABETH

(calling softly)

Mrs. Allardyce...may I come in?

No response. She places her hand on the knob, but before she can turn it, the door is pulled open, revealing Marian standing there.

Cont.

ELIZABETH

(startled)

Oh, Marian! I didn't know you
were in there.

Marian keeps the door opening narrow, looks at her.

MARIAN

What happened to your nap?

ELIZABETH

I thought it was about time I
introduced myself to our benefactor.

MARIAN

She's sleeping.

ELIZABETH

Oh. That's too bad.
(raises the watercolor)
I thought she might enjoy seeing
my picture.

Marian looks at the painting briefly.

MARIAN

I'm sure she would. When she's
awake.

Elizabeth tries to see beyond her. Marian blocks her view.

MARIAN

Elizabeth, I'm right in the middle --

ELIZABETH

Of course, dear, I'm sorry; I
didn't mean to interrupt anything.

Marian closes the door another inch.

ELIZABETH

You'll tell her, I came to visit?

Marian nods.

MARIAN

I know she'll appreciate it.

ELIZABETH

And any time she'd like some
company --

Cont.

MARIAN

I'll let you know. Be careful
on the steps.

ELIZABETH

Go back to your work Marian.
I'll be all right.

She waits as Marian closes the door, not wanting her to see how absurdly difficult the small flight of steps had become. The lock CLICKS.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

191

Ben lies back in the grass near the Camaro, smoking, relaxed, sipping cold beer from a can. His tension has been relieved by the good hard labor of clearing away a substantial amount of underbrush, which we see littering the driveway in b.g. But there is still much work to be done. He finishes the beer, picks up the scythe.

CLOSE SHOT - BEN

192

sweating profusely; he's been working again for some time, hacking at the tangled, heavy foliage. CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment. Suddenly, he stops, listens. O.s. we can hear the SOUND of a car approaching, its tires crunching over the gravel as it moves toward him up the drive. CAMERA TIGHTENS TO HIS EYES, as he tries to see what is coming.

HIS P.O.V. - THROUGH SHIMMERING GREEN

193

The distorted image of a long, black limo, rolling slowly up the drive -- the same 1955 funeral car from Ben's dream. It stops. From behind the windshield, the nightmare chauffeur stares out at Ben, a chilling smile cutting the pocked face. SOUND: The THROBBING MOTOR, idling.

CLOSE SHOT - BEN

194

going into shock, as the horror is absorbed. He begins to choke, gasp for air.

ANGLE ON CHAUFFEUR'S EYES

195

They are dim and cold behind the tinted sunglasses.

ANGLE ON BEN

196

His fingers spasm and the scythe falls to the ground. His chest drum-tight, his breath comes in gasps as the old nightmare symptoms return. Then suddenly the MOTOR SOUNDS stop.

WIDER ANGLE

197

The limousine is gone, there is nothing. Ben shakes his head, takes a deep breath; waits, listening. No sound but the wind travelling through the thick foliage. He bends slowly to pick up the scythe.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

198

A low wind stirs long shadows against the looming house.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

199

The house is in total silence, the room in darkness as CAMERA begins LONG, SLOW DOLLY to a clock above the mantel. When it FILLS FRAME, we HOLD for a long moment. Suddenly, it begins to TICK, its small pendulum arm revolving.

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

200

as clocks all over the house begin to TICK.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - ANGLE ON
GRANDFATHER CLOCK

201

as the big hand SNAPS to the hour position, with shocking loudness; it begins to TICK and CHIME, its long gold pendulum swinging.

CUT TO:

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM

202

Marian is sleeping, but Ben lies wide awake staring at the ceiling. SOUND of CHIMING can be heard o.s. CAMERA SLOWLY TIGHTENS on Ben as he sits up. As the last CHIME sounds, he looks around, confused, slowly gets out of bed.

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR

203

As Ben opens their bedroom door and steps into the hall, the amplified TICKING of the big grandfather clock draws his attention. He crosses to it, surprised that it is working. Suddenly he stops, sniffs the air, looks o.s. toward David's room.

BEN'S P.O.V. - DAVID'S ROOM

204

The door is closed.

BACK TO BEN

205

as he bolts for the room. He reaches the door, tries the knob. The door is locked. From inside the room a HISSING SOUND. He panics.

BEN

(calling loudly)

David! David!

He takes a step back and hurls himself against the door, smashing it open with a GRIND of splintered wood.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - ANGLE ON DAVID

206

as he lies pale and unmoving, on his bed. Ben rushes to him, coughing, scoops him from the mattress, wheels to carry him into the hall, CAMERA PANNING.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOVING SHOT

207

Ben, the boy in his arms, runs along the hall toward their room. Marian, a nightgown thrown across her shoulders, rushes toward them.

MARIAN

What is it!? What's wrong!?

BEN

Gas...

Shocked, she runs, following Ben back inside their bedroom.

MARIAN

My God! Is he all right?
Ben, is he?

ANGLE ON BED

208

Ben deposits David on the bed, dashes to the window, throws it open, then quickly returns to the bed, where Marian is leaning over Davy, helplessly rubbing his face, his hands. As Ben lifts him again, and carries him to the window, David's eyes open...he begins gagging, coughing.

BEN

(desperate)

Come on, Davy...breathe in deep...
deep!

Marian joins him at the window.

MARIAN

Is he all right?

Cont.

BEN

Hold him...like this.

She puts her arms around David, steadies him.

BEN

That's it, Dave...that's it.

(to Marian)

I'll be right back.

He EXITS the SHOT.

INT. DAVID'S ROOM

209

as Ben runs in, covering his mouth. CAMERA PANS HIM to an ominously HISSING gas heater. He grabs the heater knob, tries to turn it, but it is stuck. He bangs it with his fist, again and again. Finally the HISS stops. He runs to a window, tries to open it, it's stuck, he tries another...it's stuck. He grabs a lamp and hurls it through the glass, runs out and slams the door.

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM

210

As Ben returns, a frightened Elizabeth is standing in the doorway, looking pale and drawn.

ELIZABETH

(nervously)

What is it?

BEN

(moving past her
to Davy)

Damn gas heater was on.

ANGLE AT WINDOW

211

Marian still holds Davy near the open window. He begins to cry as Ben ENTERS SHOT.

BEN

(calming the boy)

Take it easy, chief. You're
okay...it's over.

MARIAN

(numbly)

I don't understand...I just
don't understand. How could
it have happened?

CLOSE SHOT - ELIZABETH

212

still at the door, staring, a shocked look in her eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREENHOUSE - DAY

213

as Marian works, loosening the soil around a potted plant. The greenhouse is much improved since last we saw it; all of the lower glass panes have been cleaned, the broken pots removed, the "possibles" lined up neatly on long tables. In the b.g., Elizabeth appears at the door, moves slowly toward Marian, scraping her feet against the thin gravel floor.

MARIAN

Have you had any breakfast?

ELIZABETH

(voice strained)

No, I overslept again.
Shamefully.

(a beat)

How's Davy?

MARIAN

(busily working)

Ben called from town. Everything's fine. He's all right, thank God.

Elizabeth sighs at this news, sits down unsteadily on an old wooden workstool, as Marian bustles around her.

ELIZABETH

You can't imagine how frightened I was...my poor little Davy...

(a beat; her voice
weak and plaintive)

Marian...I...want you to know...

(a beat)

...that I...I didn't touch
that heater.

MARIAN

(surprised)

Well, of course you didn't,
Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

If I did...I'd certainly remember.

Marian looks intently at Elizabeth and, for the first time, truly realizes the extent of her physical decline. The old woman is very pale, with dark circles under her eyes.

MARIAN

No one said you did.

ELIZABETH

I just covered him, that's all.

Cont.

MARIAN

(sharply)

Covered him?...You mean -- you
were in David's room...last night?

ELIZABETH

(lips dry, trembling)

Yes...I looked in on him. Sometimes
I don't sleep.

MARIAN

What exactly did you do in his
room, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH

I told you...only covered him.

(shivering)

It was cold...This house has
gotten so cold.

MARIAN

David's door is always open;
last night it was locked.

ELIZABETH

Well I didn't lock it.

(hesitates; voice
quavers)

I didn't touch anything but the
blanket...I mean...that's all I
remember doing...I...

MARIAN

(voice rising)

All right, you didn't lock it...
it locked itself...What about the
windows?

ELIZABETH

They were open.

MARIAN

(louder)

They were closed when Ben came
into the room. Make sense, Elizabeth!

Marian looks directly at her; Elizabeth avoids her eyes.

ELIZABETH

(breathing hard)

How can I when you're shouting at
me?...accusing me of...

MARIAN

(low, cool tone)

I'm not accusing you...

Cont.

She removes a small lace handkerchief from her purse, scrubs at her watering eyes.

ELIZABETH

(weakly)

Where's Ben...Benjie will believe me...

MARIAN

I believe you, too.

ELIZABETH

(drawing herself up)

You don't...That's obvious.

MARIAN

We all forget things, Elizabeth,
and at your age...

ELIZABETH

I don't forget things. I know
what I do.

Marian looks at her for a moment.

MARIAN

(deciding to end it)

Of course, you do. Now let me
get you some breakfast.

ELIZABETH

What about the old woman...Mrs...
Mrs...? I can't think straight.
Mrs...

MARIAN

(distinctly)

Allardyce.

ELIZABETH

Yes, Allardyce. Maybe she...

MARIAN

(emphatic)

Aunt Elizabeth, please! Now
let's forget it.

Elizabeth stands, turns, with her eyes shining wet, begins to
leave.

ELIZABETH

Please tell Ben I'm upstairs.

Cont.

MARIAN
(trying to make
up the damage)
I'll bring your breakfast to
your room.

ELIZABETH
Just like you bring it to her room...
the other old woman? Please don't
bother, Marian.

And she totters off, slowly, painfully.

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - CLOSE ON BEN - DAY 214

A concerned look on his face, as he stands over Elizabeth's
bed.

BEN'S P.O.V. - ELIZABETH 215

Fully dressed, she lies on the bed, eyes closed.

BACK TO BEN 216

BEN
(softly)
Elizabeth?

WIDER ANGLE 217

as she turns toward him just slightly.

ELIZABETH
(very weary, blinking
up at him)
Benjie...

BEN
Did I wake you?

ELIZABETH
No...

As he sits next to her, he is shocked to see how terribly old
she really looks: thin, her skin almost transparent. She
seems all veins and bones.

BEN
(trying to hide
his concern)
You're all right, aren't you?

She nods.

BEN
Feel up to martinis on the terrace?
She blinks up at him, her eyes tearing.

ELIZABETH

Ben, do you know what she said to me?

BEN

She was upset, Elizabeth...She didn't mean what she was saying.

ELIZABETH

(voice quavering)

She had no right to talk to me that way...I'd die...die before I'd do anything to hurt Davy.

BEN

Look, you two have never had words before. Why all of a sudden?

ELIZABETH

Ask your wife. Ben, maybe I am an old woman --

BEN

You're not an old woman.

ELIZABETH

But that doesn't mean I've lost all my marbles. If I closed those windows or locked the door the way she said --

BEN

I'm sure she didn't say that.

ELIZABETH

(uncertain)

-- I'd certainly remember, you don't forget things like that. I couldn't forget something as important as that... could I, could I, Ben?

(beat, wiping
her eyes)

I'm sorry. Benjie...she's gotten me so upset...

BEN

We're all upset, Elizabeth. Now why don't you come downstairs and have that drink...At least give Marian a chance to apologize.

A long moment. Elizabeth looks at him, sighs.

ELIZABETH

All right, Benjie.

(smiling weakly)

But only for you.

Smiling, Ben gives her a kiss and exits the room. CAMERA HOLDS on Elizabeth for a long moment as she seems to be gathering her strength for the effort to get out of bed. Finally she attempts to lift her head from the pillow, but can't make it. She moans, falls back.

ELIZABETH
(closing her eyes)
Dear God...help me!

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

218

As Marian closes the drapes, turns on the lamp, gets the room ready for night, she suddenly spins around startled.

MARIAN
Ben! God, you -- scared me.

ANGLE ON BEN

219

standing in the doorway.

BEN
(angry)
Do you have any idea just how much you upset her?

MARIAN
I'm sorry, but she was in his room.

BEN
(loudly)
Jesus, Marian! Why would she lie?

MARIAN
(evenly)
I didn't say she was lying. She just doesn't remember.

BEN
And I suppose she's responsible for everything else that's been happening around here.

MARIAN
I don't know what that's supposed to mean...
(starts toward door)
Now, if you don't mind, I'd like to go downstairs.

BEN
(moving by her into the room)
Where is she? I think it's about time I met her.

Cont.

MARIAN

In her bedroom, asleep. Ben,
she doesn't like anyone in here.

BEN

(listens to HUM)
What's that?

MARIAN

(hesitates)
An air conditioner.

Ben crosses to the table of photos, looks at them.

MARIAN

(nervously)
Her collection.

He starts to pick one up. Marian crosses to him, puts her
hand on his arm.

MARIAN

(quickly)
Come on, let me lock up.

BEN

What are you so nervous about?

MARIAN

I'm not nervous. I just wouldn't
want to upset her.

He begins to wander around the room.

BEN

Why do you keep her room locked?

MARIAN

She wants it that way. She's an
old woman, she --

BEN

-- gave you the key?

MARIAN

No, they were in the envelope
the Allardyses' left.

BEN

(casually)
Were the keys you used to wind
the clocks in there too?

Cont.

MARIAN

The clock keys were in the cases,
most of them. Why bring that up?

BEN

I just wondered if you wound all
those clocks.

MARIAN

Of course I did.

(uneasy laugh)

Hey, what is this -- third degree?

Marian crosses to him, smiles, is about to kiss him. Ben
grabs her hands and holds her at arm's length.

BEN

Time to throw Ben a little something?
Keep him happy and out of your way.

MARIAN

Is that what you think?

BEN

I don't know what to think any
more, Marian. You tell me.

MARIAN

All right...I'm sorry about the
other night at the pool. I don't
know why I acted that way.

BEN

You don't, huh? Well, maybe you
need a little more time to figure
that one out.

A long look between them. He releases her, turns away and
leaves the room quickly.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

220

She is still on the bed, face bathed in sweat. CAMERA HOLDS
for a long moment as she again tries to pull herself up.
Struggling, she lifts her head from the pillow, half rises,
leaning on her arm.

HER P.O.V. - THE ROOM - DISTORTED ANGLE

221

tipping...tilting...swirling...

ANGLE SHOOTING DOWN AT THE BED

222

Suddenly she emits a small, choked gasp. Her arm gives way with a horrible SNAP and she falls backward loosely, her head thumping on the pillow. Her throat rattles.

EXT. TERRACE - EVENING

223

as Marian ENTERS with a tray of drinks and an iced tray of caviar, chopped egg, etc. She places it on the table, where Ben still sits moodily. He looks at her.

MARIAN

(plea)

Just...be patient with me? Give me a little more time?

BEN

(toneless, not moving)

Time for what, to lose yourself even more in this place?

(beat)

For Chrissake, Marian! The summer's almost over.

MARIAN

All right! So it's more than I thought it would be...

BEN

Marian, it's not your house, we don't own the goddamn place.

MARIAN

But, it's my responsibility, as long as we're here.

He looks at her for a long moment.

BEN

(quietly)

Tell me something...what's more important to you -- this place... or us?

MARIAN

What kind of question is that!

BEN

(very slowly)

If I asked you to, would you give it up?

MARIAN

(shocked)

Give it up?

Cont.

Ben nods. Her voice catches in her throat.

MARIAN

Why?

She looks at him.

BEN

What if I hadn't reached Davy
in time?

MARIAN

What has that got to do with the
house, with leaving? Ben, I can't
believe you're serious.

BEN

I am, Marian.

MARIAN

Do you know how ridiculous this
sounds -- are you actually trying
to say that the house is responsible?

A long moment. They stare at each other.

BEN

(still quietly)

Would you give it up, Marian --
for me?

(beat)

Whether you think it's in my mind
or not.

She doesn't answer.

BEN

Would you?

Suddenly, o.s. SOUND of David screaming within the house.

DAVID'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Mommy! Mommy!

They rush from the terrace.

INT. SECOND-FLOOR CORRIDOR - TOP OF STAIRS -
CLOSE ON DAVID

DAVID

(hysterical;
calling to them)

It's Elizabeth!

ANGLE ON MARIAN AND BEN

225

As they reach the top of the stairs CAMERA PANS with them and David as they all rush toward Elizabeth's room.

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - ANGLE TOWARD DOOR

226

as they run in. Marian holds David back while Ben crosses quickly to the bed.

ANGLE AT BED

227

As Ben reaches her, Elizabeth is a grotesque figure of pain; her face is pressed into the pillow, her left arm twisted hideously under her; her breath comes in short, racking gasps.

Ben drops to his knees beside her, horrified.

BEN

Oh, my God! Elizabeth!

(wheeling to
Marian)

Get Davy out of here!

ANGLE ON MARIAN AND DAVID

228

The boy's eyes are saucered, staring at the o.s. horror, as Marian stands frozen, clutching him to her side.

CLOSE ON BEN

229

BEN

(hoarsely)

Marian! For Christ's sake,
move!

BACK TO MARIAN AND DAVY

230

as she pulls David from the room.

BACK TO BEN AND ELIZABETH

231

The old woman's breathing is becoming quicker now, more agonized, the side of her face, blue. Ben looks at her helplessly, doesn't know what to do.

BEN

(whispers, pleadingly)

Elizabeth...

No response, only the terrible rattle in her throat. In the b.g. Marian reenters FRAME, Ben turning to her.

BEN

The doctor I took Davy to...
where's his number?

Cont.

MARIAN
 (looking shocked,
 at Elizabeth)
 On the hall table next to the
 phone.

Ben rises quickly, crosses to the door.

BEN
 (as he exits)
 Stay with her.

INT. FOYER - CLOSE ON BEN - NIGHT

232

Dialing, he puts the receiver to his ear. CAMERA HOLDS
 for a beat, then the o.s. SOUND of a busy signal. He slams
 the receiver down, picks it up and begins to dial savagely
 again.

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - CLOSE ON ELIZABETH -
 NIGHT

233

her face buried in the pillow, breath still very ragged.
 CAMERA PANS to Marian, who sits on the edge of a chaise,
 hands clasped tightly in her lap, staring at the dying
 woman. A lamp is lit on a small night table next to the
 bed. She turns to the door, as Ben ENTERS o.s.

MARIAN
 (tensely)
 Did you get him?

ANGLE ON BEN

234

at the door.

BEN
 (flatly)
 No. It was busy.

CAMERA PANS with him as he crosses to the bed, kneels
 beside Elizabeth.

WIDER ANGLE

235

MARIAN
 Well, it can't be busy all night.

BEN
 (quietly)
 Can't it?...They're all busy,
 Marian. Every line I tried.
 Even the goddamn operator.
 (cynically)
 Surprise.

She looks confused.

MARIAN

I don't know what you're talking about...I'll go down and try to reach him again.

BEN

(with a
chilling smile)

You do that, Marian.

She gives him a look, EXITS the room.

INT. FOYER - CLOSE ON PHONE

236

In b.g. Marian comes downstairs, picks up the receiver, starts to dial. CAMERA PANS UP to her face, HOLDS for a beat.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM

237

Ben is still at Elizabeth's side as Marian ENTERS the room.

MARIAN

(announcing)

I got him...Dr. Ross.

BEN

(amazed)

You got him?!

MARIAN

He's coming right over.

BEN

But all the lines were busy, Marian.

(beat)

I didn't imagine that!

MARIAN

(quietly)

I'm sure you didn't...The important thing is, he'll be here...

Ben gets up, moves the Windsor armchair to the side of the bed, sits down.

MARIAN

Is there anything I can do?

BEN

No. Just check on Davy, then wait for the doctor downstairs.

237 Cont.

As she leaves CAMERA TIGHTENS on Ben, staring numbly at the bed. O.s. the SOUND of the old woman's shallow, ragged breathing.

INT. ALLARDYCE SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

238

The lamp by the window casts its red glow over the HUMMING room. The drapes are closed; the silver tray, its food untouched, is on the table beside the tall wingchair. In b.g., the door opens and Marian enters, locking it behind her. She stands, confused, unsure of just what brought her here. Now she moves slowly, touching the flowered urns, vases, the bronze holders...and, finally reaching the bedroom door, places her hands against the wood, tracing the carvings -- as the HUM fills her, eases her. She takes a small cylinder of gold-tipped matches from a table, lights the candles in their bronze holders. The room glows and shimmers -- as she slides into the wingchair, unfolds the napkin and, as if guided by unseen hands, begins cutting into the meat.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - ANGLE ON BEN - NIGHT

239

as he sits numbly in the chair, staring at o.s. Elizabeth, hypnotized by the death which is taking place in the room.

HIS P.O.V. - ELIZABETH

240

She has fallen into fitful sleep, her jaw slack, her thin lips tightened inside her mouth. She seems mummified, almost as if she were shriveling in front of his eyes.

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON MARIAN - NIGHT

241

as she puts aside the linen napkin, raising her head, sensing a change in the house, a fragrance in the air. She stands, hesitates, starts slowly toward the double doors.

INT. FOYER - UP ANGLE ON MARIAN

242

as she comes down the stairs TOWARD CAMERA, still looking for the source. CAMERA PANS with her as she heads toward drawing room doors.

INT. ELIZABETH'S ROOM - ANGLE ON BEN

243

as he becomes aware of the o.s. SOUND of a car, slowly approaching the house, tires CRUNCHING over the gravel drive. As the car stops below, Ben stands, relieved that at last the doctor has arrived. Suddenly he stiffens, listening more intently to the SOUND of the idling motor.

87

ANGLE ON ELIZABETH

244

as she awakens abruptly, moaning low in her throat.

BACK TO BEN

245

as he slowly moves toward the window, knowing he must look down, but terrified to do so. His chest tightens; his heart begins to pound wildly. Finally, at the window, he stops, and then looks down.

HIS P.O.V. - DISTORTED ANGLE

246

The nightmare limo is parked below, near the front steps, to the left of the windows, its engine THROBBING in the darkness.

CLOSE ON BEN

247

Terror fills his eyes. As he begins to back away his legs encounter the armchair, and he falls backward into it, staring, transfixed, at the window. Suddenly, he reacts to another SOUND: the heavy front entrance door as it CRASHES open, echoing through the house. CAMERA TIGHTENS to his eyes.

BACK TO ELIZABETH

248

as she twists onto her back, eyes wide, moaning in pain.

CLOSE ON BEN

249

as he now listens with a terrible intent to new SOUNDS from below: a hollow SLIDE-THUMP, SLIDE-THUMP, as if someone is dragging a heavy object up the stairs. Now, the SOUND much closer, in the corridor outside. The SQUEALING of wheels as the object clatters along the hall toward the room.

ANGLE ON ELIZABETH

250

as with one last enormous effort, she wrenches herself to a sitting position against the headboard, her eyes riveted to the closed bedroom door. An animal-like keening issues from her gaping mouth.

ANGLE ON BEN

251

as he, too, now stares at the bedroom door.

DISTORTED ANGLE ON BEDROOM DOOR

252

as the chambered SOUNDS stop directly outside, in the hall. CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment. Suddenly the door EXPLODES OPEN, revealing the nightmare chauffeur, standing behind a massive bronze coffin. Abruptly he propels it towards them with tremendous force. It BLACKS OUT THE LENS.

INT. GREENHOUSE - ANGLE ON INSIDE GLASS DOOR - 253
NIGHT

As the door is pulled open, Marian stands, BACK-LIT, in the doorway. The look on her face is one of total enchantment. She switches on the lights, moves forward into the room.

MARIAN'S P.O.V. - THE GREENHOUSE 254

A riot of life and color, the long tables and shelves filled with flowering ferns, great bursting orchids, huge roses, etc. Everything in the greenhouse has come to vivid life. CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment as the SOUND of a mournful church bell tolling begins to filter in.

SLOW DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 255

We are at Elizabeth's funeral. The overall effect should remind us of the funeral scene from Ben's childhood. A circle of friends and relatives surround the open grave. David and Ben stand near the casket, as a MINISTER drones in b.g. (Marian is not there.) Church bell continues to TOLL o.s.

ANGLE ON MINISTER 256

MINISTER

...in her courage and faith...
this good woman is now joined
in eternal peace with her Maker
in His Divine Kingdom, and we
who grieve must...

ANGLE ON BRONZE COFFIN 257

as it is slowly lowered into the ground.

BACK TO BEN AND DAVID 258

tears in their eyes, as they drop flowers onto the descending box. The Minister continues to intone o.s. (AD-LIB: "Splendid woman, now rests in the House of the Lord...") etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

259

Marian has just finished getting the room ready for night. As she opens the door to leave, a hand suddenly grabs it, pulling it back, to reveal Ben in the hallway.

BEN

(dry and flat-toned)

Life...sure as hell goes on,
doesn't it?

(beat)

Elizabeth is dead...Doesn't that
mean anything to you?

MARIAN

It means a great deal to me.

BEN

(quiet, firm)

Call the old lady.

(beat)

I want to see her.

He forces her back into the room, and immediately starts toward the bedroom door.

MARIAN

(following him)

Ben! Get away from that door!

As he reaches for the knob, twists it, it's locked. She grabs his hand. He reverses position, his hand clutching hers now, holding it tightly.

BEN

(icy)

Marian, I want you to open this door.

MARIAN

I can't. She keeps it locked.
I don't have the key.

He looks at her.

BEN

All right Marian...What is it you
know? What is it you've known all along?

MARIAN

(quietly, as if to
calm him)

Let me go? Please?

He drops her hand slowly, still watching her.

Cont.

BEN
(flatly)
We're getting out of this house,
Marian.

It seems to take a moment for his words to penetrate. She moves away from him nervously, thinking.

BEN
Did you hear what I said? We're
getting out of this house.

MARIAN
(waits; attempting control)
How...can we?

BEN
(overlapping)
Easy -- we just pack up and go.

MARIAN
(quick look toward
carved door)
Ben...may I lock the room, please?

BEN
Forget this room! It's all you can
think about -- the house, the old lady.

MARIAN
She depends on me. I'm the one --
there's no one but me to take care of
her. You can't expect me to --

BEN
(loudly)
You're obsessed with it. All of it!

MARIAN
(flaring)
I am not obsessed with it!

BEN
(closer to her)
Marian, this house...is destroying us.

MARIAN
(slowly; whispered;
almost a plea)
This house...is everything...
everything we've ever wanted...and
it's...ours, darling...for as long as...

Her voice fades; she gestures vaguely. Waiting for his reaction:

BEN
(hands on her shoulders,
intense)
Tomorrow morning we're going back...
with or without you.

MARIAN
Going back to what?

BEN
To what we had.

MARIAN
We had nothing!

BEN
(very quietly)
And what have we got now?

MARIAN
(struggling)
I...can't...

Ben turns slowly and leaves the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - ANGLE ON CLOCK - 260
EARLY DAWN

The great TICKING grandfather clock begins to CHIME five, SLOW PAN to the open door of David's bedroom. As the first gray light of dawn filters through the bedroom windows, softened by a misting rain, we see David asleep in bed, Ben dozing fitfully in a nearby chair. Suddenly, o.s. there is a sliding, grating SOUND. CAMERA SLOWLY TIGHTENS to Ben, as he stirs awake. He looks around, mystified as the SOUNDS build in intensity. Louder now, echoing above him, outside the windows, down the hall, below him, and all around him, rising and becoming chambered. CAMERA PANS with him, as he gets up and quickly crosses to a window. He reacts, in shock.

HIS P.O.V. - PORTION OF HOUSE AND ROOF 261

Rotted, peeling clapboards are dropping from the side of the house, as weathered, cracked roof tiles slip loose and cascade in a dreamlike SLOW MOTION over the eaves, all dissolving silently on the flagstone below.

BACK TO BEN 262

as he stares, unbelieving at the sight.

HIS P.O.V. - HOUSE

263

Where the old clapboards were, we now see freshly painted white wood; where the old tiles were, new, rich, shining black ones. It is almost as if the house is shedding its skin.

BACK TO BED

264

As the SOUNDS build to a thundering crescendo, Ben wheels to Davy's bed.

BEN

(shaking David awake;
shouting above the roar)

Davy!...Davy! Get up!

DAVID

(coming awake with
a start)

Wha...What!...What's wrong, Daddy!?

BEN

(pulling him to his feet)

We're going!

Before the frightened boy can comprehend what is happening, Ben rushes him from the room.

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAWN

265

as Marian sits, sleeping peacefully in the gold wingchair. The SOUNDS are only a distant rumble above the steady HUM of the room. CAMERA HOLDS for a moment as suddenly Marian awakes, looks toward the draped curve of the bay windows. Vaguely disturbed, she moves to the window, pulls aside the heavy velvet, and peers out.

HER P.O.V. - THROUGH WINDOW

266

In the misting rain of early dawn, Ben can be seen below, a small figure, as he runs dragging the protesting David up the gravel drive toward the garage.

ANGLE ON MARIAN

267

hands against the window.

MARIAN

(calling)

Ben!...Davy!

She wheels, rushes out.

INT. GARAGE - DAWN

268

With the garage doors open, SHOOTING PAST the Camaro, Ben and David can be seen running TOWARD CAMERA. As they reach the car, the boy slides to one knee on the oily garage floor. Ben pulls him up, jerks open the passenger door, pushes him inside.

DAVID

(crying)

Daddy, you're scaring me...
I don't wanna go! I don't!

Ben SLAMS the door, moves quickly to the driver's side, climbs in, starts the motor with a WHINE.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE SHOOTING OVER BEN'S SHOULDER - 269
THROUGH WINDSHIELD

as Ben guns the engine, blasting out of the garage onto the gravel drive.

ANGLE ON DAVID

270

as he huddles against the door, staring at his father, crying, trembling.

DAVID

Where's Mommy?...Why are we going
without Mommy?

ANGLE ON BEN

271

A look of intense determination as he wheels the sliding, spinning Camaro around the wet, white circle of drive. Stones and gravel SMASH against the undercarriage.

EXT. HOUSE - ANGLE UP FRONT STEPS - DAWN

272

as Marian dashes out the front door. CAMERA PANS with her as she runs down the steps, onto the driveway, revealing the Camaro, roaring crazily toward her at a breakneck speed.

LOW ANGLE - CLOSE SHOT - MARIAN

273

as she desperately attempts to wave them down.

MARIAN

(screaming)

Ben! Stop!

ANGLE ON THE CAMARO

274

as it whips by, spewing gravel, almost sideswiping Marian.
CAMERA HOLDS as she watches it go.

MARIAN'S P.O.V. - THE CAMARO

275

as it disappears, fishtailing down the misty drive into the
dense wall of green. Abruptly, the rain comes down with a
roar.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE ON BEN

276

Heart pounding, gasping for breath, the old panic has set in
as he fights to see past the laboring windshield wipers.

HIS P.O.V. - THROUGH WINDSHIELD

277

RUSHING TOWARD CAMERA, the driveway has suddenly become a
menacing, impenetrable wall of green.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE ON BEN

278

As he reacts, clutching the wheel; he lowers his head, mashes
down on the accelerator.

EXT. DRIVE

279

As the Camaro leaps forward, slamming into the thick under-
brush, the mass of vines whip and close around it, forcing it
to a grinding halt.

CLOSE SHOT - TIRES

280

whirling, spinning in the gravel, making no progress.

EXT. DRIVE - LOW ANGLE

281

As the rain continues to POUND down, the driver's door
suddenly whips open and Ben plunges out. He is frantic as
he attempts to rip the mass of vines from the trapped Camaro.

CLOSE SHOT - BEN'S LEGS

282

As a vine snakes around his foot, he crashes to his knees in
the weed-choked gravel. He SCREAMS as a wet branch slashes
viciously across his face.

INT. CAMARO - ANGLE ON DAVID'S TERRIFIED PROFILE

283

as he stares out the vine-choked front window. Suddenly,
Ben's blood-smeared face appears in back of him at the side
window. David reacts in shock as Ben, wild-eyed, dives

Cont.

into the car, SLAMS the door, grinds the Camaro into "reverse" and again GUNS backward up the drive.

DAVID
(hysterical, crying)
I wanna go back! I wanna go
back!

EXT. DRIVE

284

as the Camaro skids to a backward stop -- then, wheels spinning, roars forward again. CAMERA PANS with it as it hurtles into the underbrush, its windshield wipers SNAPPING, its aerial ripping off.

INT. CAMARO

285

As it jolts to a final, wrenching stop, Ben's head snaps forward, slams against the windshield, knocking him sideways.

EXT. DRIVE - DAY

286

as Marian, rain-soaked, runs toward the car.

INT. CAR

287

As Marian opens the door, Ben is behind the wheel, vague, staring directly ahead, motionless. David, beside him, crying.

MARIAN
(soothingly)
It's all right now, it's all
right.

Ben looks at her distantly, then numbly, lets himself be pushed aside. Marian climbs in behind the wheel. Ben watches her as she turns on the ignition.

BEN
(very slowly)
You're...accepting...it...
All...of...it.

Marian says nothing.

BEN
You know...and...you're...
a part of it...

David is silent. Marian's face is impassive. She begins to back along the gravel drive.

EXT. DRIVE

288

The rain has stopped as the Camaro backs, turns around, and moves PAST CAMERA, in the direction of o.s. house, CAMERA HOLDS on the drive, now, miraculously clear.

INT. CAMARO - CLOSE MOVING SHOT - BEN'S FACE

289

Slowly, very slowly, he turns his head.

BEN'S P.O.V. - DISTORTED ANGLE

290

On the seat beside him, driving the car, is the pock-marked chauffeur. He turns to Ben, smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROLFE BEDROOM - ANGLE ON BEN - NIGHT

291

He is lying under the covers, eyes closed, breathing evenly. CAMERA MOVES BACK to include Marian and Dr. Ross, who is standing by the bed, repacking his medical bag. Marian looks pale, distraught.

MARIAN

(quietly)

Will he be all right, Doctor?

Ross does not answer, but gestures toward the hall. They start out.

INT. SECOND-FLOOR CORRIDOR - MOVING SHOT - MARIAN AND ROSS

292

as they walk slowly along the hall toward the main staircase.

ROSS

He's heavily sedated, which means he'll sleep through the night. But by tomorrow, I'm afraid he'll require hospitalization.

MARIAN

(quietly)

I see.

ROSS

Of course, you understand we don't have the proper facilities here. You'll have to take him to New York.

MARIAN

But...will he be all right?

Cont.

ROSS

I'm not a specialist in these matters, Mrs. Rolfe, but with proper care...

He lets his voice trail off.

MARIAN

I'll make sure he gets it.

ROSS

If you need me tomorrow, I'll be at my office.

MARIAN

Thank you, Doctor.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - ANGLE ON DAVID - NIGHT 293

The room is in darkness. David lies on his side in bed, FACING CAMERA, eyes wide. O.s. SOUND of Marian at the door. He rolls toward her, as she ENTERS SHOT, sits beside him on the bed, strokes his hair.

DAVID

Is the Doctor gone? Will Daddy be okay?

MARIAN

(softly)

Yes, baby, Dr. Ross says he just needs some rest.

DAVID

Will we be going back to New York tomorrow, Mommy?

A moment of silence as Marian looks at him.

MARIAN

We'll see, sweetheart.

(beat)

Now go to sleep.

She kisses him, tucks the covers close around him, EXITS. CAMERA TIGHTENS to David's eyes, as he blinks, closes them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RISE OF LAWN - LONG LENS SHOT - DAY 294

as Marian wheels Ben TOWARD CAMERA; he sits in an old wicker wheelchair that she found in the basement. A blanket across his knees, he stares blankly ahead. David skips alongside of them.

EXT. POOL - ANGLE ON MARIAN AND BEN - DAY

295

Marian makes Ben comfortable under the shade of a large beach umbrella, as in the b.g. David splashes in the shallow end of the pool.

CLOSER ANGLE

296

As Ben sits, trance-like, unblinking, Marian wipes the perspiration from his brow and upper lip, dampens his face with a wet towel.

MARIAN

(turning to David,
calling)

All right, sweetheart...c'mon
out while I go fix us some lunch.

ANGLE ON DAVID

297

As he climbs out of the pool, CAMERA PANS HIM to Marian and Ben.

DAVID

Aw, gee, Mom...can't I stay in
if I promise not to go to the
deep end?

MARIAN

No, baby...just stay with your
father until I get back.

She turns, EXITS SHOT. CAMERA HOLDS on David as he watches her go, then finally turns to look closely at Ben.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

298

as Marian busily prepares a picnic lunch, wrapping sandwiches, etc.

EXT. POOL - DAY

299

In an effort to gain his father's attention, David now stands in front of him, BANGING a large beach ball against the concrete.

CLOSE ON BEN

300

staring, eyes blank.

CLOSE ON DAVID

301

Frustrated, he gives up, allows the beach ball to bounce away, then stands -- just looking at his father.

CLOSE SHOT - BEN

302

still staring.

BACK TO DAVID

303

As he places his hands on the arms of the wheelchair and leans forward, PAN WITH HIM to include Ben.

DAVID
(staring directly
into Ben's eyes)
Daddy?...

No reply.

DAVID
Ya'know how you always said I
didn't know how to swim. Well,
I do! Do you wanta see?

Still no answer.

DAVID
Well, do you or don't you?
(shakes Ben's arm,
frustration in his
voice)
C'mon! Do you?...Well, I'm
gonna show you anyway!

As David turns and runs OUT OF SHOT, splashing into the o.s. pool, we HOLD on Ben's face: For the first time, his eyes blink.

INT. KITCHEN - ANGLE ON MARIAN - DAY

304

Finished preparing lunch, she picks up the tray of sandwiches, goes to the kitchen door and turns the knob. The door will not open. She rattles it. Then, setting the tray down, she tries again. It's locked. She attempts to unlock it, can't. Panic in her eyes, she quickly runs to the kitchen window.

HER P.O.V. - THROUGH WINDOW

305

In the distance, at the pool, David is starting to wade toward the deep end.

MARIAN'S VOICE
(o.s., calling sharply)
David!

REVERSE ANGLE - THROUGH KITCHEN WINDOW

306

As Marian tries to open it, it is jammed.

ANGLE ON THE POOL AND DAVID

307

as he continues to splash toward the pool's deepest level.

100

CLOSE ON BEN 308

We can see the alarm in his eyes, but he still is unable to move. His entire body begins to tremble. His mouth begins to work as he tries to speak, cannot.

INT. CORRIDOR - FROM KITCHEN - DAY 309

As the swinging door flies open INTO CAMERA Marian dashes by.

BACK TO DAVID 310

Now in the deep end of the pool, he looks o.s. at Ben as he starts an awkward paddling. Suddenly, the pool water begins to stir and ripple, as if under a sea wind, yet the day remains clear and windless.

EXT. TERRACE - THROUGH FRENCH DOORS - DAY 311

as Marian runs into the drawing room. Crossing immediately to the French doors, she tugs at them in desperation, but they, too, refuse to open. Looking around frantically, she turns and wheels OUT OF SHOT.

INT. FOYER - DAY 312

as Marian rushes out of the drawing room to the front door, finds that it, too, won't open.

ANGLE ON POOL AND DAVID 313

By now, David is floundering in the deep end, the pool water alive and smashing at him.

DAVID
(desperately
screaming)
Daddy! Help me! Help me!

CLOSE SHOT - BEN 314

his face pearly with sweat, eyes bulging, yet unable to aid his stricken son. His hands grip into shaking fists as his body quakes with strain.

BACK TO DAVID 315

gasping, choking, as he swallows water, arms thrashing wildly. Suddenly, his head goes under.

EXT. TERRACE - ANGLE ON FRENCH DOORS - DAY 316

as a chair explodes through the glass doors, shattering them. Marian steps quickly through the ragged opening, runs o.s. toward the pool.

CLOSE ON POOL SURFACE - DAY

317

As David's head bobs up for a moment, we can see the extreme panic in his eyes. With the water churning about him, he tries desperately to call for help, but he gags as more water fills his mouth. Again, he disappears below the surface.

ANGLE ON BEN

318

as he lurches forward, exerting maximum effort, falls to the concrete, starts dragging himself toward the pool.

ANGLE UNDER WATER - SHOOTING UP AT DAVID

319

as, thrashing and struggling, he is being sucked downward toward the bottom of the pool. As he is pulled closer and closer to CAMERA, the air escapes from his lungs in a stream of bubbles. CAMERA HOLDS for a long agonizing moment, then, suddenly Marian can be seen diving through the air. As she plunges into the water, her image is blurred and distorted. Hair streaming behind her, she swims frantically down toward David.

ANGLE ON POOL SURFACE

320

now inexplicably calm, barely a ripple. No sign of Marian or David.

CLOSE SHOT - BEN

321

Lying on the concrete, he raises his head, mouth agape, neck veins distended. He emits a hoarse, broken cry.

BEN

Mar...ri...an!!

BACK TO POOL SURFACE

322

CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment on the placid water. Then, suddenly Marian geysers up, dragging David with her, hauling him into shallow water.

ANGLE ON GRASS VERGE BY POOL

323

David sits trembling as Marian wipes him in a towel, crooning over him. Finally she faces Ben.

BEN

Davy...he...he...

MARIAN

He's fine now, Ben...Davy's fine now.

BEN

I...I couldn't...I tried to...
had to watch while he...

MARIAN
(soothing him)
I know...I know...don't think
about it.
(beat)
He's alive...we're all alive.

ANGLE WIDENS as David joins them; he burrows his wet head
against Ben's chest.

DAVID
I'm sorry, Daddy...
(looks into his
father's eyes)
Are ya okay now?

BEN
(softly, tears
in his eyes)
Yeah, chief. I'm okay now.

DAVID
I hate this place! I wanna
leave here.

Ben turns to look at Marian, drawing a deep, quavering
breath.

MARIAN
We are, darling. We're leaving
today.

She turns back to David.

MARIAN
Nothing means more to me than
you and your father.
(a beat)
And this place isn't good for you...
for either of you.

Ben smiles, cradles Marian close in his arms. CAMERA SLOWLY
PANS to pool -- and the clear, still, blue water.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DRIVE AT FRONT OF HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON 324

The Camaro is parked at the front entrance of the house
(directly below the high windows of the Allardyce suite).
David is loading his toys, etc., into the back of the auto,
while Marian arranges various items in the open rear trunk.
Ben appears on the porch, coming out the front door, carrying
another suitcase.

BEN

Well, that does it. We've got everything.

He begins to close the front door.

MARIAN

No, Ben, wait.

She starts up the steps toward him.

MARIAN

I have to see Mrs. Allardyce first.

Ben just stands there, hand still on the doorknob; he isn't moving aside. Marian stops, looks at him.

BEN

I don't want you to go back in that house.

There is a pause.

MARIAN

Ben, you know we can't just ride off and leave that poor old lady alone up there without even telling her we're going.

BEN

(quietly)

Marian, I'm sure she knows...
(then, in a flat,
measured tone)
Now I don't want you to go back in there.

MARIAN

(losing patience)

Ben, please, let's not argue about this. I'll just leave her our number in case she needs us. I won't be a minute.

And before he can protest further she brushes past him into the house.

ANOTHER ANGLE

325

as Ben wearily carries the suitcase down to the car, throws it into the rear trunk, closes the lid, walks to the driver's side, gets in. And waits.

INT. FOYER - FULL SHOT - DAY

326

Long, slanting late-afternoon shadows cloak the house as Marian walks briskly through it towards the stairs. But now she slows, hesitates, turns, looking back at the shined splendor of the antique-filled rooms. CAMERA TIGHTENS as she drinks in the beauty around her. She walks over to touch a cut-glass vase, a scrolled table, a curved chair.

INT. THE CAR - ANGLE ON BEN AND DAVID

327

waiting.

INT. HOUSE - STAIRS TO ALLARDYCE SUITE - ANGLE
ON MARIAN

328

as she walks up to the sitting room doors, and opens them.

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON MARIAN

329

as she glides past the table of photos to stop at the heavy, scrolled bedroom door. Leans close to it (SOUND OF HUM) and knocks gently.

MARIAN

Mrs. Allardyce...Mrs. Allardyce...
it's me...

INT. CAR - ANGLE ON BEN AND DAVID

330

as the boy shifts restlessly in the front seat next to his father.

DAVID

When's Mom coming back? I
thought we were gonna go.

BEN

We are.

(checks his watch,
beginning to get
upset, worried)
She's been up there long enough.

He jabs the wheel horn button, and we hear the BEEP-BEEP cut the lazy afternoon silence.

EXT. CAR - ANGLE ON BEN

331

as he gets out to peer upward.

HIS P.O.V.

332

The high curve of bay windows, ablaze with afternoon sunlight.

HIGH ANGLE - SHOOTING DOWN

333

From the roof with an enormous stone chimney in the f.g. we see the small figure of Ben lean into the car window and hit the horn button three more times. BEEP-BEEP-BEEP.

INT. CAR

334

Ben moves around to David's side of the vehicle, leans in to him.

BEN

I'm going up to get your mother.
You stay here.

DAVID

(whining tone)

But I'm hungry...couldn't I just
go into the kitchen and get me
some --

BEN

(cutting him off)

No, David.

(beat)

Just wait in the car. Okay,
chief?

And he quickly EXITS FRAME. CAMERA STAYS on the boy's face, as he stares after his father.

INT. HOUSE - SERIES OF MOOD ANGLES

335-
338

as Ben moves through the clock-ticking interior toward the old lady's suite. We see him:

- A. From below, mounting stairs, as he calls out "Marian!"
- B. From the end of the second-floor corridor, again calling.
- C. Checking their bedroom from the hall, to find it empty.
- D. Finally, CAMERA CLOSES on him as he stands outside the Allardyce rooms, tense and angry. He throws open the sitting room door, starts into room.

BEN

Marian, what's...?

He stops short, seeing the room is empty.

106

INT. SITTING ROOM - ANGLE ON BEN

339

as he stands for a beat, adjusting his eyes to the semi-gloom.

HIS P.O.V.

340

sweeping the room. Dust motes move lazily in the slanting sunlight; shadows fill each corner, like dark inks. Now we are aware of the HUM, riding out from the closed bedroom door. It subtly increases as Ben crosses to the heavy carved door.

ANGLE AT BEDROOM DOOR

341

Ben confronts it as one might confront an enemy. He knocks, the heavy wood swallowing the sound. Knocks again.

BEN

Marian! Are you in there?

No reply. The HUM is rising. He reaches down, puts his hand on the carved doorknob, and turns it...SOUND of a CLICK.

CLOSE SHOT - CARVED KNOB

342

as Ben's hand turns it slowly -- all the way. The door swings inward.

ANGLE ON BEN'S FACE

343

as he moves into the room -- which is alive with the HUM, like a great electrical hive of bees. (The HUM builds all through the remainder of scene.)

HIS P.O.V.

344

The area is darker than the sitting room, but furniture shapes itself out of the shadows: a massive, draped four-poster bed (unslept in), thickly-upholstered cut-velvet chairs, a bulky, brass-studded table, covered in rotting lace -- and, at the far end of the big room, by the tall windows, the figure of a white-haired woman. Seated in a wheelchair, her back to CAMERA, she is silhouetted in the glare of the late afternoon sun. One lace-gloved hand rests on the wooden arm of the chair.

ANGLE ON BEN

345

as he takes a tentative step or two into the room.

BEN

(softly)

Mrs. Allardyce? I don't mean to disturb you, but I'm looking for Marian.

(beat, he takes
a few steps
toward her)

She said she was coming up here to tell you we were going.

107

ANGLE ON WHEELCHAIR

346

No reply. No movement -- except that the gloved hand tightens, crab-like, on the chair arm.

TIGHT SHOT - BEN

347

as suddenly the old look of fear begins to creep back into his eyes. His breathing becomes irregular, heavy, as he continues to move toward the chair.

BEN

(voice unsteady,
louder)

Now, I know she came up here.

(beat)

You must have talked to her.

Where is she?

His breathing is now much more labored. Sweat begins to streak his face as the fear continues to build.

BEN

(voice rising)

Mrs. Allardyce -- I'm speaking
to you. Please answer me.

Silence, as Ben's patience finally snaps. He reaches out, grabs the back of her chair and wheels it around.

BEN

Answer me!

CLOSE SHOT - BEN

348

as he stares in stunned shock at the figure in the chair. His hand raises to shield his mouth as he starts backing away.

BEN

(numb horror;
choking out the
words)

Oh...my...God!

ANGLE ON FIGURE IN CHAIR

349

It is Marian -- her hair now totally white, dressed in a lace brocade gown -- her eyes hard and glittering, a terrible smile on her face. Slowly, she rises from the chair -- toward Ben.

BACK TO DAVID IN CAR

350

where he sits, arms around his legs, rocking on the front seat, looking upset by the long delay.

LOW ANGLE - SHOOTING UP AT CURVED BAY WINDOWS 351

as suddenly, IN SLOW MOTION, the body of Ben Rolfe explodes through the window, fragments of wood and glass showering around him in a grotesque ballet as he falls TOWARD CAMERA.

INT. CAR - ANGLE ON DAVY 352

As the boy reacts to the o.s. SOUND of shattering glass, the body of his father smashes head-first through the windshield.

EXT. CAR 353

as David, shrieking with horror, leaps from the auto.

DAVID
(eyes streaming
tears)
Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!

HIGH WIDE ANGLE - SHOOTING DOWN 354

from the roof with the great stone chimney in the extreme f.g.; the tiny figure of David is seen far below, yelling, waving his arms, the lifeless body of his father buried in the windshield of the car. Now there is a deep RUMBLE -- as the massive cut-stones of the chimney shift slightly, cracking; a cloud of white stone dust spills from the cracks, sifting down the slanted roof.

LOW ANGLE ON DAVID 355

reacting suddenly to the grinding, sliding SOUNDS of the collapsing stones. He freezes.

DOWN ANGLE - ZOOM SHOT 356

CAMERA JUMPS IN TIGHT to David's shocked eyes.

HIS P.O.V. - THE GREAT CHIMNEY - SLOW MOTION 357

as it lets go with a brutal ROAR -- and we watch the huge, killing stones sledge down in a white thunder directly TOWARD CAMERA. They FILL FRAME.

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - MOVING SHOT - TABLE OF PHOTOS - DAY 358

as CAMERA SLOWLY DOLLIES the length of the velvet-draped table, the many photos sliding by. Finally, it stops -- as three new photographs FILL THE FRAME: David, Ben and Elizabeth stare out at us, black-faced, frozen in time. CAMERA HOLDS for a long moment.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

359

now solid and restored in all its newborn grandeur, a mass of fresh white wood and stone. The flowered gardens and lawns surrounding the house are lush and green, as a gentle summer breeze stirs the branches of the trees. The drive fronting the house is neatly trimmed, its white gravel glinting diamond-like under the sun.

Suddenly, o.s., there is the SOUND of a CAMERA SHUTTER CLICKING...FREEZE FRAME.

CAMERA HOLDS for a beat, then ANGLE SLOWLY BEGINS TO WIDEN as we hear the SOUND of o.s. VOICES.

ROZ' VOICE

(o.s.)
It's beautiful...

BROTHER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
Just glorious...

WALKER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
Like it usta be...

CAMERA CONTINUES TO WITHDRAW until we see that we have been looking at a PHOTO, fresh-minted in its new frame, mounted solidly on the wall, a permanent part of the display of all the other photos of the Allardyce house. CAMERA HOLDS, as the o.s. VOICES continue in hallowed tones. And, as we listen, do we discern a slight change in the timbre of the voices; is it possible that they are beginning to sound younger?

ROZ' VOICE

(o.s.)
And our mother...

WALKER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
She's back...

BROTHER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
Our darling...

ROZ' VOICE

(o.s.)
Restored to us...

Cont.

BROTHER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
...in all her beauty...

WALKER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
In her youth...

ROZ' VOICE

(o.s.)
Her glory...

BROTHER'S VOICE

(o.s.)
With us once again...

CAMERA HOLDS on the photo as we begin to ROLL FINAL
CREDITS.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END